

THE TIMES

No. 65,973

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 20 1997

35

WHICH
CAR
KEEPS
YOU
COOLEST?
PAGE 5



CAN THIS
WOMAN
RESCUE
LAURA
ASHLEY?
PAGE 23



GHOSTS
THAT WILL
SAVE THE
OLD VIC
Simon Jenkins
PAGE 14



MICHAEL
KELLY
Kelly,
Dodi and
dumping
PAGE 13

REGIS D'INGENHOUZ/REUTERS

Tommy Graham cleared on suicide

Scottish row Labour MP suspended

BY JILL SHERMAN AND SHIRLEY ENGLISH

THE Labour MP Tommy Graham was suspended by his party yesterday pending an investigation into local politics in Renfrewshire. But he was cleared of any responsibility for the suicide of fellow MP Gordon McMaster last month.

The Chief Whip, Nick Brown, said that serious allegations remained against Mr Graham that had to be properly investigated. These included that he had worked with a "known opponent" of the Labour Party.

At the same time Labour's general secretary, Tom Sawyer, announced that a task force was being established to investigate three constituency parties in Scotland and that two councillors there were to remain suspended.

The Paisley scandal completely overshadowed the Government's launch of its devolution referendum campaign in Scotland and an historic show of unity by the country's three parliamentary parties.

Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, shared a platform with Alex Salmond of the SNP and the Liberal Democrat Menzies Campbell to push for a "double yes" vote on September 11. But the occasion was hijacked by problems in the west and Mr Dewar was left to combat suggestions that the steale allegations had damaged the pro-devolution campaign and suggestions that a Labour-dominated Edinburgh parliament would be "Paisley writ large".

Mr Graham, the MP for West Renfrewshire, later confirmed that he had been suspended. But in a statement read by his solicitor, he said that he was delighted to have been exonerated of any part in Mr McMaster's "tragic demise". Mr Graham, who was named in Mr McMaster's suicide note, has denied involvement in a whispering campaign or in spreading rumours that Mr McMaster was homosexual.

British 'spy' trawler found

The British trawler *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

TV & RADIO	42, 43
WEATHER	22
CROSSWORDS	22, 44
LETTERS	15
OBITUARIES	17
SIMON JENKINS	14
ARTS	30-32
CHESS & BRIDGE	38
COURT & SOCIAL	16
SPORT	57-62, 44
STYLE	12
LAW REPORT	18



Tommy Graham from membership of the PLP.

The "known opponent" mentioned was Paul Mack, the former deputy leader of Renfrew Council who was suspended by the Labour Party and is now an independent councillor. Mr Mack, who was also reportedly named in the suicide note, called his own press conference yesterday to "clear his name" and call for a judicial inquiry into local politics in Paisley.

He accused Irene Adams, the Paisley North MP and a close friend of Mr McMaster, for "selective leaking" of the suicide note and denied that he had been involved in smearing the former member for Paisley South. "That Gordon and I were political rivals and indulged in some fairly robust heated exchanges was no secret," he said. "What I had to say to Gordon I said to his face, what I wrote to Gordon I always signed."

"It's perniciously simplistic to suggest that there's some people wearing white hats and there's others wearing black hats. Mrs Adams, with independent haste within hours of Gordon dying, was phoning the Press and telling them the contents of his letter." It was, he said, "the most degrading, cynical, scandalous piece of political opportunism".

Mr Graham's alleged links with Mr Mack are now to be the subject of a National Executive Committee investigation and Mr Sawyer said that there would also be a full membership check in Paisley South before a candidate was selected to fight the by-election — there had been claims of membership lists being packed with names to try to deselect Mr McMaster.

In the meantime, the Paisley North party would remain unconstituted — as it has been since 1995 when similar allegations were made about attempts to oust Mrs Adams.

Magnus Linklater, page 14
Leading article, page 15

Inmates' easier life 'sop to the IRA'

BY RICHARD FORD AND MARTIN FLETCHER

THE Government was accused last night of capitulating to the IRA after eight convicted terrorists and five men charged with terrorist offences were moved out of the most secure jail units in Britain.

They left the "prisons within prisons" at three top security jails after the Prison Service downgraded their security classification from Category A (exceptional risk) to Category (high risk).

It means they can have physical contact with visitors, use the chapel, library, football pitch, gymnasium, workshops and education facilities and mix with a wider range of fellow prisoners.

Among those no longer considered an "exceptional risk" are the six men each given 35 years last month after being convicted of a plot to bomb London's electricity supply and a man facing a double murder charge in connection with the London Docklands bombing in February, 1996.

The decision to lower the security classification, which means the 13 men will have an easier life in jail, was seen as a government response to Sinn Fein following the latest IRA ceasefire.

It provoked a furious re-

The first grapes of 1997 being harvested in vineyards near Bordeaux. Hopes are high that the early start will provide rich pickings for wine producers

Early harvest points to a vintage '97

FROM BEN MACINTYRE AT CHATEAU HAUT-BRION, BORDEAUX

THE earliest wine harvest for more than a century got under way in Bordeaux this week, raising hopes that 1997 may prove to be one of the great vintages of modern times.

Fifty weeks before the usual start of the vendanges, a group of white Bordeaux wine producers in the Pessac-Léognan region sent workers into the scrapping vineyard to begin picking grapes.

The earliest Bordeaux wine harvest on record began on August 15, 1893.

The exceptionally early start is due to a combination of climatic factors: a mild winter, a dry spring, a damp early summer and blazing sun for the last few weeks.

An early harvest is widely seen as the precursor to a bumper crop, since the grapes can be picked at their optimum ripeness and in easy conditions.

The white grape harvest now under way in Bordeaux is already being hailed as remarkable, but the all-important quality of the red wine

will depend on whether the favourable weather holds until the end of the next fortnight, when the picking season for Bordeaux's most prestigious red wines starts in earnest.

If the sunshine continues, the 1997 vintage is likely to be as good if not better than the last two excellent years. If the weather breaks, bringing rain or humidity, then the grapes are likely to rot faster and the resulting juice may be diluted, destroying hopes for a prime vintage.

A sudden change could also cut back the volume of the harvest and raise prices. "It is always a gamble," observed Jean-Bernard Delmas, director of Château Haut-Brion, the winemaker who led the charge into the vineyards this week.

Château names as Lafite-Rothschild, Pétrus and Margaux are likely to follow suit within a few days.

The precocity of the harvest

means this will be a legendary year," the burly and affable wine producer remarked

staunchly as, with almost religious reverence, he watched the first tractor-loads of ripe grapes tumble into gleaming steel vats for crushing.

Such prestigious Pessac-Léognan châteaux as La Tour-Martin and Smith-Haut-Lafitte have also begun their white grape harvests this week. The picking in Burgundy and champagne is similarly expected to make an early start, although only a matter of days.

Mr Delmas struck an almost mystical note. "The great vintage of 1811 was marked by a comet. This year we had Hale-Bopp. It's just folklore but who knows, he observes devoutly, adding that the great wines of the 1940s were also the result of abnormally early harvests.

If the grape harvest is half as ripe as the adjectives already being bestowed on it, then 1997 will certainly prove a superb year both for the Bordeaux wine trade and also for British wine buffs, given the current strength of sterling

against the French franc.

Though 1893 wines were regarded at the time as exceptionally fine for the period, the prices obtained for them by the growers were very low because the harvest came in the middle of a profound slump (Robin Young writes).

Edmond Penning-Roswell,

the former chairman of the Wine Society, is one of the few Britons alive to have tasted wines of 1893. Mr Penning-Roswell described the wine as having extraordinary deep colour and tasting surprisingly young and fruitfully sweet in the 1970s.



"Five weeks early this year so it should be a marvellous vintage"

HOME & CONTENTS INSURANCE

BUILDINGS SUM INSURED	CONTENTS SUM INSURED	ANNUAL PREMIUM
£250,000	£50,000	£495
£500,000	£50,000	£595
£750,000	£75,000	£795
£1,000,000	£100,000	£995

Home & Legacy specialises in providing Insurance for higher value homes and contents anywhere in the UK and we will save you £100's on your premiums - these example combinations are valid for your area, and include accidental damage. We also offer monthly instalment plans and competitive premiums for fine art, antiques, jewellery, and other valuables.

MORE COVER FOR LESS

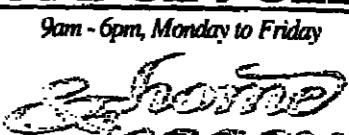
Home & Legacy offers the widest cover for the lowest premiums in the UK including accidental damage and worldwide cover for contents and valuables.

NO AREA LOADING

These premiums quoted are true for anywhere in England, Scotland, Wales, Channel Islands and Isle of Man.

PERSONAL, CONFIDENTIAL & EFFICIENT SERVICE

Call Robyn Harris direct
0171 824 8224
9am - 6pm, Monday to Friday


Robyn Harris

HOME & LEGACY INSURANCE SERVICES LIMITED
BACKED BY THE UK'S LEADING INSURERS

Premiums quoted are valid for a period of 30 days from the date of the publication and are subject to The home being of standard construction and free from history of subsidence or flooding. Standard physical security to force in the home. Satisfaction claim experience and acceptance of rate for insurers. Policy terms and conditions: Government insurance Premium Tax (currently 4%). Our minimum premium level is £195.



Michelle
Smith finds
gold again

MICHELLE SMITH, the triple Olympic gold medallist whose successes have been clouded by unproven drugs allegations, won her first European title in the 400 metres individual medley in Seville yesterday.

The Irish swimmer, who was promptly called for her third drug test in a week, decided: "I am very proud of what I've done here. I am just going to enjoy the rest of the week." She did not, however, attend the winner's press conference and could be disciplined.

Britain won its first gold medal through Paul Palmer in the 200 metres freestyle.

He said: "There is a continual course of action carried on by, among others, Greenpeace Ltd, which has involved par-

ties other than the present pursuers, who hold licences in the respect of the exploration for and exploitation of oil in the Atlantic, and also to prevent the pursuers and other parties from discharging their legal right to explore for and exploit mineral resources in these areas."

The court also ruled that Jon Castle, captain of a Greenpeace vessel, was in breach of BP's *Stena Dee* platform. It was occupied for a week by protesters until they were arrested on Sunday. Mr Castle faces a prison sentence or a fine.

A BP spokesman said: "BP's principal concern is not the recovery of damages. Rather, it is to ensure that its lawful operations are not interfered with and that safety is not compromised. BP has never questioned Greenpeace's right to campaign, but we do object to their employing unlawful tactics."

"BP offers to suspend its claim for damages against Greenpeace and its senior campaigners for so long as there is no further interference with BP's operations in the Atlantic frontier area."

Niki Kortvelyessy, speaker of Greenpeace Ltd, which has involved par-

British Trawler *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

A British trawler, the *The Gail*, which sank in 1974 with the loss of 36 lives, amid claims that it was involved in spying on the Soviet Union is thought to have been found. — Page 2

Judges say girls must not be sent to adult prisons

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

A GIRL of 16 won a High Court test case yesterday when a Home Office policy on dealing with young female offenders sentenced to detention was ruled unlawful.

Two High Court judges said it was wrong for the Prison Service to send females aged between 15 and 21 to an adult jail before deciding where they should serve their sentence. Mr Justice Sedley sitting with Mr Justice Aspasia are expected to give the reason for their decision later this week.

They were told that the girl, referred to only as F, spent 15 days in Risley prison, in Cheshire, sharing cells with adult prisoners before being released on bail.

She has now been found a place at Styall woman's prison, one of seven jails with units for juveniles. The others are Brockhill at Redditch, Low Newton in Durham, Drake Hall in Staffordshire, Bullwood Hall in Essex, Eastwood Park in Gloucestershire and East Sutton Park at Maidstone.

The judges ruled that the girl should remain free until a correctly worded committal

warrant naming Styall not Risley had been issued. She had been sentenced to eight months by Accrington Youth Court, Lancashire, on July 29 for robbery, assaulting a police officer, disorderly behaviour and other offences.

Her lawyers told the High Court judicial review hearing that the Home Office had a policy under which all girls were sent to one of five adult prisons for assessment and allocation to juvenile units.

Ian Wise, for the girl, said that under the 1982 Criminal Justice Act, the Home Secretary had the power to direct that an offender be detained in a prison or remand centre for a temporary purpose.

The use of the singular, he said, meant that this power should be exercised only in individual cases and in exceptional circumstances, whereas the practice was applied to all juvenile girls.

This is contrasted with the practice in respect of young male prisoners who are sent directly to young offender institutions, Mr Wise said.

"There are, of course, no young offender institutions

specifically for females, only female prisons which have been designated as having a dual purpose for adult and young offenders."

Between 60 and 80 girls under 18 were in custody at any one time. All of them started their sentences alongside adults. This was against the general principle that juvenile offenders must go, not to jail, but to young offender institutions with educational and training facilities to help them to prepare for their return to the community.

Robin Tam, for the Home Office, said the fact that all juvenile girls were sent initially to prison did not mean that their cases were not being individually considered. The prison authorities needed to assess each case to make a rational decision on placement. He admitted that if more juvenile places were available, assessment might not need to be carried out in prison.

There are no young offender institutions solely for young female offenders because there are so few teenage girl offenders in custody.

Ministers urged to pay student teachers as lure

BY DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

THE Government is considering paying a salary to teacher-training students in an effort to solve the classroom recruitment crisis.

Officials at the Department for Education and Employment have discussed "back-dating" part of a newly qualified teachers' pay, effectively giving them a wage in their final year of training.

No new money would be needed. The qualified salary rate of £14,280 would be split between the final year of training and the probationary year after qualifying, which

the Government proposed in its education White Paper.

Students on the final year of a four-year undergraduate course, or on the year-long postgraduate course, would receive about £5,000. During their probation year, they would get nearly £10,000. Teaching unions are likely to press for a payment closer to the unqualified teacher level.

The payments are believed to be in addition to government plans for bursaries for trainee teachers to help to cover the annual £1,000 tuition fees that begin next year.

Degree vacancies, page 19

**ON NO ACCOUNT
ACCEPT LOW INTEREST
WHEN YOUR BANK
ACCOUNT'S IN CREDIT.**

Caution: Many bank accounts give you little, if any, interest when you're in credit. But not the Abbey National Bank Account.

At Abbey National we currently offer one of the highest credit interest rates on the high street, and, if you pay in £500 or more each month, we'll give you a bonus which doubles the rate of interest. In fact, as you can see from the table below, with an Abbey National Bank Account you could be receiving up to 14 times more interest, compared to another bank we could mention.

And it doesn't stop there. The Abbey National Bank Account offers everything else you would expect from a bank account, and if you're switching from another bank, we'll give you a four month free overdraft, so there's no danger of upsetting your cash-flow.

Interested? Then you'll be glad to hear that you can apply for an Abbey National Bank Account over the phone and receive a decision there and then. So to apply, pick up the phone, call Abbey National Direct on 0500 200 500 and quote reference A564C/10. Or pop into your local branch.

0500 200 500

**ABBEY
NATIONAL®**

M65

Telephone lines open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm. To assist us in improving our service we may record or monitor telephone calls. Comparisons based on interest bearing current accounts. Rates may vary. Rates quoted for the Abbey National Bank Account include bonus payable on a balance of at least £500 in the account each month for 12 months. You may be able to receive interest gross, otherwise it will be paid net of income tax at the prescribed rate. See leaflet for full conditions. Overdrafts and Multifunction cards are only available to Abbey National Bank Account holders, subject to status and not available to persons under 18 years. Written quotations are available on request. After the initial interest free period, interest will be payable at the standard variable rate, currently 11.9% APR on authorised overdrafts. APR is variable. Overdrafts are repayable at any time in accordance with our personal banking terms and conditions. Telephone banking is available to Bank Account and Instant Plus Account customers who have a Multifunction, Electron or AbbeyLink card. Abbey National and the Umbrella Couple symbol are trademarks of Abbey National plc, Abbey House, Baker Street, London NW1 6XL.



A Greenpeace supporter during an anti-drilling protest on BP's Stena Dee oil rig

BP offers peace

Continued from page 1 of the European Federation of Green Parties, said they were organising an international boycott of BP goods and services.

"The Green Party in Britain might not worry BP much. But like them we are an international body and wield considerable influence in many countries, in particular in Germany, the country that brought most pressure to bear on Shell during the Brent Spar episode."

In 1995 when Greenpeace mounted its campaign against Shell and its dumping of the Brent Spar, Shell's products were boycotted and some filling stations on the Continent were firebombed.

Uta Bellion of Friends of the Earth said yesterday that one of their reasons for backing Greenpeace was concern over the threat to non-violent protest if BP won its action. Tony

Juniper, campaigns director at Friends of the Earth, said yesterday that the BP action could backfire and compare it to the so-called McLibel court case in which McDonald's successfully sued two campaigners for defamation.

Although the food company won its case, some observers felt that it lost the public image in Germany, the country that brought most pressure to bear on Shell during the Brent Spar episode.

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

BP's offer could backfire and compare it to the so-called McLibel court case in which McDonald's successfully sued two campaigners for defamation.

Although the food company won its case, some observers felt that it lost the public image in Germany, the country that brought most pressure to bear on Shell during the Brent Spar episode.

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

The Greenpeace campaign against BP is part of a wider protest against exploration and drilling in the so-called Atlantic frontier.

Greenpeace reacted last night to BP's offer by describing it as a "climbdown". A spokesman for the group said that BP appeared to want to negotiate when there was nothing to negotiate".

Shock? Not us, say artists as Academy issues health warning

Nude, limbless sex dolls are not for faint-hearted as the 'boring' RA strives to create a show called *Sensation*. Dalya Alberg reports

FOR the first time in its 220-year history, the Royal Academy of Arts has felt obliged to display health warnings for anyone entering its latest show.

The faint-hearted will be alerted to the shocking nature of a sculpture featuring limbless, nude pre-pubescent girls with penises for noses and sex-doll orifices for mouths when it goes on display next month. It is the work of the British brothers Dinos and Jake Chapman whose names have become synonymous with sensation and good prices in the world of contemporary art. They have said that they do not set out to shock and that their work "is based on a lot of intelligent conversation".

The RA show, titled *Sensation*, has already caused controversy because it will also include a portrait of the Moors murderer Myra Hindley - created from thousands of handprints of two children. Hindley and her victims' families are campaigning to have

the statue removed. Reaching to the legal planned exhibit, Michael Rosenblatt, a member of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, said: "It is the RA's job to keep art with what's happening in the world, but all art is not made that way. What they are trying to be original, but being desperately boring."

The brothers' work, *Zygotic Acceleration Bio-genetic D-Sublimated Libidinal Model (Enlarged 1,000)* could be the most controversial work ever shown at Burlington House, a far cry from the genteel Summer Exhibition of lavish Impressionist shows staged by the bastion of tradition.

It is likely to outrage if reaches to its showing in a commercial London gallery in 1998 are anything to go by. The police decided to pay a visit, and the dealer Victoria Miro screened off her shop window. A Victoria Miro spokesman said that they fully expect these fibreglass mutant mannequins to cause "trouble" at the RA.

The brothers Chapman are among Britain's bright young things whose art is avidly purchased and vigorously promoted by Charles Saatchi, Britain's foremost collector of contemporary art. He is liaising closely with the Royal Academy in picking out works for the loan exhibition opening on September 18.

The Chapmans - like many of the artists collected by Mr Saatchi - are not strangers to controversy. One critic has said: "These boys make Damien Hirst look like the Angel Gabriel. Jake and Dinos Chapman specialise in the Art of the Repellent. Rotting cows are tame by comparison." Another has noted that they "revel in gore, mutilation and pre-teen sex".

Others hail them as masters blurring their depiction of horror to Goya's *Disasters of War*. Jake, born in Chelten-



Jake Chapman, below, and his brother Dinos with one of their sculptures: Their work "is based on a lot of intelligent conversation"

ham in 1966, and Dinos, born in London in 1962, graduated from the Royal College of Art and have collaborated together since 1991. The police are among their regulars: they attracted the attention of the vice-squad last year with a pornographic film attacking an Italian dealer who had banned a pair of their mannequins with genitalia in strange places.

Their spokesman explained that they were so upset, they reworked the piece to feature a severed head of the dealer: they gave him a penis for a

nose and featured it as a prop, a sex toy, in the movie which they made with professional porno actresses. He stressed that the Chapmans do not set out to shock.

Jake Chapman said that there are "any number of ways" to interpret their work. Seeing the mutant figures as "a genetic experiment that's gone wrong - or right" is one approach.

September is their month: apart from the RA show, they will be at the Victoria Miro Gallery, and in New York, at the Gagosian Gallery, which

they are planning to convert into "a mass graveyard littered with skulls and overlooked by zygotic sculptural figures". Prices will range from £16,000 to £40,000.

The RA is undoubtedly expecting to cause a stir - if only in its choice of the show title *Sensation*.

Philomena Davidson-Davis of the Royal Society of British Sculptors, expressed concern: "I do think museums and galleries such as the RA ought to think very carefully about the face it's presenting to the public - particularly as this

getting more and more offensive."

"We've got to draw the line somewhere and say stop."

A Royal Academy spokeswoman said yesterday: "We were very careful to make people aware before hand. We showed Westminster Council, for example. We showed them and established a legal situation. We also put a sign on the door of the gallery which said - Some visitors may find the content of this exhibition disturbing."

She noted that the ICA's audience is less shockable than the Royal Academy's.

only two on show." The brothers' last extensive exhibition was staged at the ICA last year.

An ICA spokeswoman said yesterday: "We were very careful to make people aware before hand. We showed Westminster Council, for example. We showed them and established a legal situation. We also put a sign on the door of the gallery which said - Some visitors may find the content of this exhibition disturbing."

The American Express platinum card is strictly by invitation only and the chosen few pay £375 a year for the privilege.

Asian employed white woman 'for the image'

BY KATHRYN KNIGHT

AN ASIAN company director employed a white woman so that his business would present a positive multi-cultural image, an industrial tribunal was told yesterday. But he forced her to resign because his Asian clients disliked taking orders from her.

Linda Johnson, a 45-year-old personnel manager, said Dhiren Doshi, head of Doshi Professional Services, told a colleague that in his culture she would "never be treated as an equal".

In a "calculated act" to widen the company's market, Mrs Johnson said she was asked to pose for promotional brochure in a false role and ordered to appear in a video of a mock board meeting. In reality, her role on the board had gone to an Asian man, she told the tribunal in Croydon, south London.

Mrs Johnson, a mother of three who is claiming unfair dismissal due to racial and sexual discrimination, told the tribunal that she joined the company on a £25,000 salary in December 1995. She had previously worked in personnel at Harrods and at Alders of Croydon.

The company, based in Norbury, south London, was an umbrella firm covering a range of in-house services, including financial advice and wine distribution, given to

clients for a monthly fee. Mrs Johnson said most of the clients were Asian, as were three quarters of the staff, but she was paid much less.

She said her Asian male peers were paid between £5,000 and £20,000 more than her, and drove Mercedes or Ford Mondeo company cars while she was given a secondhand Honda.

She had also been denied access to a pension scheme and private health care, which was afforded to her Asian male colleagues.

In March 1996, Mrs Johnson said, she was demoted without reason. "I was told to report to a male Asian who had previously been consid-



Mr Doshi said at the tribunal that Mrs Johnson had fabricated her claims to make more money

Channel pallet man swamped with offers

BY STEPHEN FARRELL

THE Scotsman who tried to resign with a £3,500 pay-off but this payment had been stopped when Mr Doshi heard she was making a claim to the tribunal.

Giving evidence to the tribunal, Mr Doshi denied racial and sexual discrimination and said Mrs Johnson had fabricated her claims to make money out of the firm. He claimed she had blackmailed him by threatening to take him to a tribunal unless he gave her up to £40,000.

The hearing continues.

The former Royal Signals lance corporal lost four of his front teeth, food, driving licence and photographs of his four children when he was nearly rammed by a tanker while paddling across the Channel. He attempted the crossing because he did not have enough money to buy a ferry ticket in Calais.

"It all sounds very promising. I went to a dentist in Portsmouth this morning and they said I would have to wait until the end of September on the NHS," he said. "I still feel pretty exhausted but I'm far more optimistic than I have been for the last few months."

After drying his clothes at his brother's home in Portsmouth, he received calls from Franklin Bath, "career outplacement" specialists, Harley Street dentist Lawrence Gaunt and the offer of a one-year tennis ticket from Sea France ferries.

The former Royal Signals lance corporal lost four of his front teeth, food, driving licence and photographs of his four children when he was nearly rammed by a tanker while paddling across the Channel. He attempted the crossing because he did not have enough money to buy a ferry ticket in Calais.

"It all sounds very promising. I went to a dentist in Portsmouth this morning and they said I would have to wait until the end of September on the NHS," he said. "I still feel pretty exhausted but I'm far more optimistic than I have been for the last few months."

Polo firm faces cruelty charge

BY LIN JENKINS

A POLO company may be prosecuted over the death of two valuable thoroughbred horses.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is carrying out post-mortem examinations to confirm that the horses died from one of the most common forms of poisoning during the summer - eating ragwort.

One of the animals, a tenaged gelding, was found lying dead against the barbed wire fence of a field in Lightwater, Surrey. Another, a mare aged about eight, was still ill if had to be put down immediately. Two other horses connected with Magna Carta Polo were taken from the field. They were staggering and disoriented in a manner associated with ragwort poisoning. Polo

ponies can be worth from £4,000 to tens of thousands of pounds.

Police called in the RSPCA after they were alerted by a neighbour to the appalling state of the polo ponies in a field riddled with ragwort and bracken. Both are harmful to horses, and ragwort comes under the Injurious Plants Act, allowing the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food to serve clearance notices. However, there are few instances of landowners being forced to get rid of it.

Martin O'Sullivan, an RSPCA inspector, said: "All animal owners have a duty to look after their animals and if one becomes ill or dies as a result of neglect, we will investigate."

The ownership of the horses has not been established, but all were connected with Magna Carta Polo of Windlesham, a polo club.

Surey, run by John Horswell, an Old Etonian and respected polo player. Mr Horswell, 43, said that his staff always made sure that the fields were free of ragwort. "It is bracken poisoning. Some horses get a taste for it. There is nothing you can do about bracken, it is endemic to this area."

Buff Crisp, secretary of the Hurlingham Polo Association, said that the welfare of ponies was taken extremely seriously by those running the sport. "We have a welfare officer in every club in the country and take the abuse of ponies as a very serious offence. We are unaware of this incident but will be asking the RSPCA for the details." He said that Mr Horswell was a respected member of the polo scene. "He does an awful lot to help the youngsters."

Passion for plastic lowers the gold standard

BY PETER FOSTER

GOLD credit cards, which once guaranteed instant attention from hotel managers, Savile Row tailors and West End restaurants, are fast losing their shine.

Banks have taken to handing out such symbols of wealth and prestige to allcomers according to a survey published yesterday.

The numbers of gold cards have more than trebled from 800,000 in 1993 to more than 2.5 million by the end of last year. Today more people own gold cards than draw the dole.

The chief culprits in this devaluation of the gold standard appear to be banks hoping to entice new customers by flattering them with the status once conferred only on the seriously wealthy.

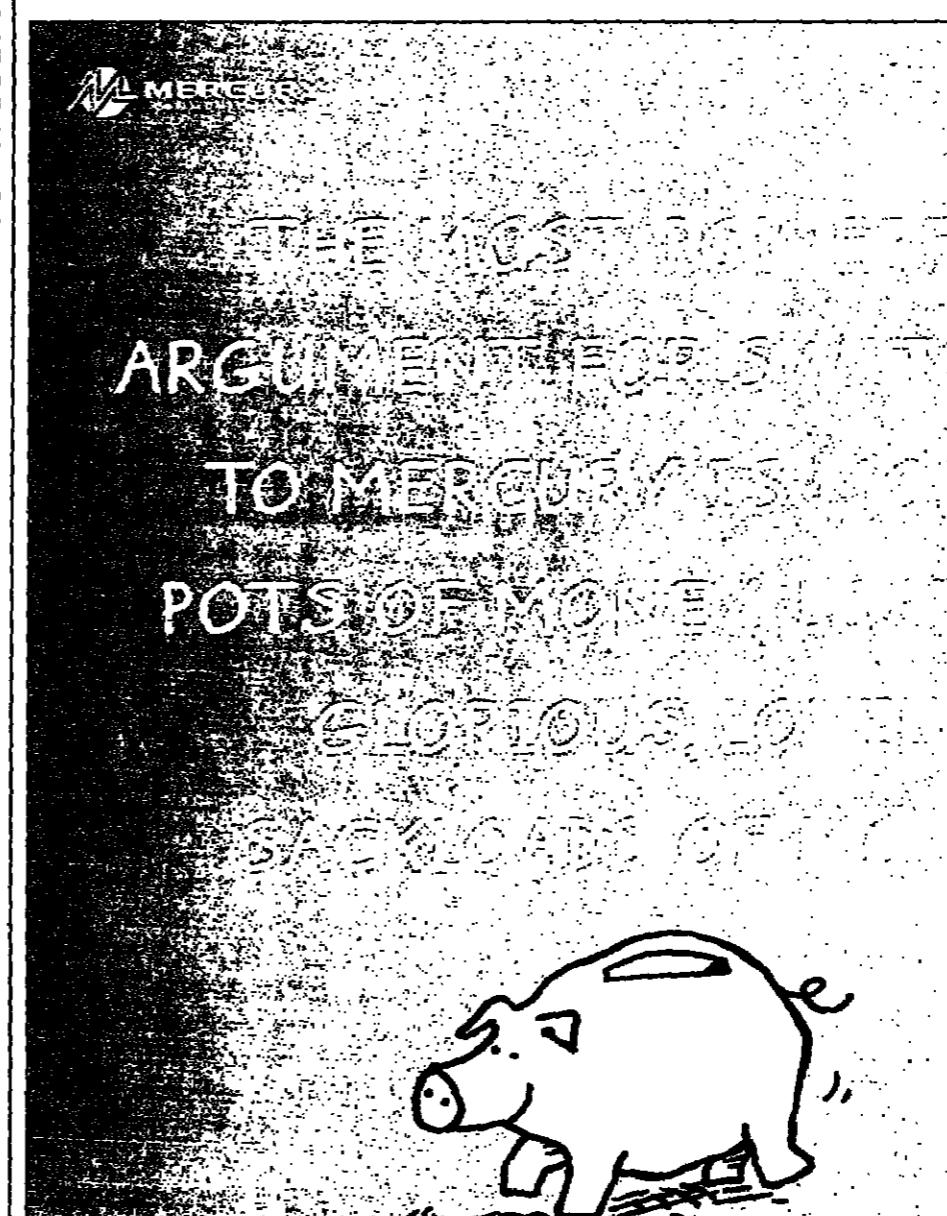
William Elderkin, of the analysts Datamonitor who compiled the report, said banks were switching to the gold market in response to greater competition in the credit card business.

The explosion in the number of gold cards is inevitably undermining their exclusivity, he said.

The minimum income for a gold card has been frozen by many issuers for the past four years. A salary of £20,000 is thought sufficient to be eligible. For some this may be thought dangerously close to the national average wage of £17,000.

While their poorer cousins enjoy the dubious kudos of elevation to the gold set, heavyweight spenders have graduated to Platinum or Premier cards which retain some last vestige of the influence wielded by the gold card in its early days.

The American Express platinum card is strictly by invitation only and the chosen few pay £375 a year for the privilege.



GUARANTEED CHEAPER CALLS

DOUBLE YOUR MONEY BACK

Wonga, dosh, dough, call it what you like, but with Mercury you'll make great savings if you make international or national calls.

In fact, we're so confident that you'll save money on your call bill (even against BT's PremierLine and Friends and Family),

FreeCall 0500 500 366

Pledge terms apply on Mercury SmartCall and UK-Call bill only, compared against BT's basic rates and discount schemes, excluding line rental and temporary promotional offers. Not available on Calling Card or business packages.

Nurses in Saudi case suffer over 'guilty' rumours

By MICHAEL THEODOULOU
AND DANIEL McGROarty

THE two British nurses accused of murdering an Australian colleague in Saudi Arabia are said to be close to mental collapse as they plead with the authorities to deliver a verdict after reports that they have been found guilty.

Rumours that they have been convicted have reached Deborah Parry and Lucille McLauchlan in their stifling and crowded cell. British consular officials will visit the two in the Damman central prison today and are pressing the Saudis to allow a British doctor to examine the women in an effort to have them moved to better conditions.

Jonathan Ashbee, brother-in-law of Ms Parry, said: "These women cannot take much more. We are in the dark. The Foreign Office has been unable to discover what happens next, but the mental torture for the two of them is quite intolerable."

The Saudi authorities maintained their protracted silence yesterday about whether their case had been referred to a higher court for sentence. Speculation in Saudi Arabia is that the women's case has been passed to the Court of Cassation.

Mr Ashbee said: "Our lawyers say this could mean the judge has referred it because the decision is outside his remit, or they are deciding whether their forced confessions should be allowed. At worst, it means that court will pass sentence."

Both women have denied murdering Yvonne Gilford, a staff nurse stabbed 17 times in her bedroom, in the hospital complex where they all worked.

Ms Parry, 38, from Alton, Hampshire, is already receiving psychiatric treatment and Ms McLauchlan, 31, of Dundee, is weak with sickness and diarrhoea. Both are said to be unable to sleep for fear of being beheaded if found guilty.

The Foreign Office said last night: "The Saudis have not told us anything, but we are making frequent and urgent inquiries."



Veterans Geoff Larkin and Len Berry sitting astride a Mark I in front of the larger Mark II at the Teesside Training and Enterprise Council near Middlesbrough

Salute to courage of human torpedo



Navy frogmen preparing for a torpedo attack. The crews volunteered for dangerous missions

Exhibition of last missile recalls

their vital role in helping to
destroy might of Hitler's navy

A RESTORED Second World War human torpedo went on show to the public for the first time yesterday.

The battery-powered Mark II, — a missile packed with explosives and two frogmen — is the only one of its kind. It was discovered at Portsmouth docks by Robert Hobson, whose father, Lieutenant-Commander Robert Hobson, helped to develop the missile and took part in several missions.

The Mark II is on display at the Teesside Training and Enterprise Council near Middlesbrough, where it was restored. There is also a model of a Mark I.

Both torpedoes were submarine-launched, but in the Mark I version the crewmen sat astride the torpedo as it was fired. In the Mark II they were inside the missile, with their heads sticking out, to make it more streamlined.

Once they reached their target ship the nose of the torpedo, containing the explosive charge, was released and attached like a limpet mine.

Mr Larkin and Mr Berry were at yesterday's unveiling. "They asked for volunteers

The men would then beat a hasty retreat with the remainder of their craft.

The pilots were equipped with screw-on helmets and gas masks. The primitive oxygen cylinders had to be self-contained to prevent tell-tale bubbles escaping.

The torpedoes could reach a speed of eight knots and helped to destroy more than 250,000 tonnes of enemy shipping. They also gained vital intelligence on enemy positions and delivered spies behind enemy lines.

The restored Mark II is a testimony to the perseverance of Mr Hobson, who first became aware of the story of the human torpedoes when clearing out his late father's house. Through personal papers, Mr Hobson tracked down two other torpedo pilots, Lieutenant-Commander Geoff Larkin and Petty Officer Len Berry, and four years ago unearthed the remains of the last torpedo.

Mr Larkin and Mr Berry were at yesterday's unveiling. "They asked for volunteers

for special and hazardous missions," said Mr Larkin, 79. "I was in America at the time and volunteered principally so I could return to England and get married. I soon realised why they had the saying 'Never volunteer for anything'."

Mr Berry, 83, said: "It is great to see one of these back in business, it is right that their place in history is recorded."

Mr Hobson, who has established the Chariots Trust, aimed at preserving submarine history and hopes to set up a museum to display naval

artefacts, said: "I am a little sad that I never got to speak with my father about his missions, but that was the way of these men — they never spoke of their bravery."

"Finally there is something which displays what these men did. You only have to look at this contraption to recognise the bravery of the men who operated them."

□ The last surviving Royal Navy destroyer from the Second World War, HMS Cavalier is being sold by South Tyneside council to a Malaysian firm to become part of a museum.



One of the missiles being readied for launch

Pet-food poultry is sold to shops in £3m fraud

By RUSSELL JENKINS

ENVIRONMENTAL health officers believe they have uncovered a nationwide conspiracy by rogue meat dealers to pass off hundreds of tons of condemned poultry as fit for human consumption.

A team of officers from Rotherham council in south Yorkshire launched an investigation last year into the alleged illegal trade, worth £5 million, in chicken and turkey breasts that were sent to rendering plants to be turned into pet food. They believe that more than 1,400 tons of tainted meat may have been illegally reclaimed and found its way via companies in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Sussex on to shop shelves.

The meat is said to have passed through a number of middlemen and retailers before reaching the shops. The council said that the supermarket chain Kwik Save is believed to have unwittingly stocked the meat through franchises or suppliers.

The meat involved is that from animals which may have

died on farms or on the way to slaughter. The carcasses are categorised as "dead on arrival" for pet food only. However, the carcasses were plundered to retrieve prime cuts for human consumption. Chicken costing 2p a pound is offered at the beginning of the meat-laundering process could attract prices of about £1.20 a pound in the shops.

The investigation has resulted in 17 meat dealers being charged with conspiracy to defraud and conspiracy to sell unfit food. Another 20 butchers will face prosecution on

The meat is said to have passed through a number of middlemen and retailers before reaching the shops. The council said that the supermarket chain Kwik Save is believed to have unwittingly stocked the meat through franchises or suppliers.

The meat involved is that from animals which may have

Parents see red over fourth new United kit this year

By RICHARD DUCE

A PLEA for cheaper children's replica football shirts was made yesterday after Manchester United decided to launch its fourth team strip this season.

United, the most commercially successful club in the world, is to launch the strip for the side to wear in the Champions' League. Should the club fail to progress in the competition the strip, retailing at £40, may be worn only six times.

Stella Spiers, the vice-chairman of the Football Supporters' Association, said yesterday: "Manchester United is certainly exploiting the market. It would not be so bad if children's sizes were much cheaper."

News of a fourth strip was

not greeted warmly by parents whose children support Manchester United. James Beaumont, of Sale, whose son, Marcus, eight, is a keen United fan, said: "We've drawn the line one shirt each year."

Maxwell Brown, 11, from Ashton, in Lancashire, said: "If they are not careful kids like me are really going to lose faith in the team. We just can't afford to keep up. I've been earning a little extra by doing the dishes for my mum, so if I keep it up maybe I'll have enough to buy the shirt. Then again, by the time I've saved up there'll probably be another one out."

The replica football kit industry is worth £200 million. Umbro, which makes Manchester United's shirts in an £11 million deal, said:

"Rather than exploiting fans, we are giving them an opportunity to commemorate United's appearance in the most important European competition."

Football, page 41

The taxman takes a bite when you earn it.

The taxman takes a bite when you spend it.

Do you really want him to take a bite when you save it?

It's your lolly, so why let the taxman take a crunching 20% bite from the interest when you're saving it?

Just send off for our free, easy to digest money guide. It shows you different ways to stop the taxman getting his nasty grinders into your savings. It's also a straightforward guide to making the most of your money. For your copy

or to arrange an appointment with a Savings and Investment Adviser, simply send off the coupon or call free on 0500 758 400.

Call TSB PhoneBank now for your free guide quoting TM20/8

0500 758 400

TM20/8 is based on our understanding of current tax law and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs as at 1st July 1997. The law relating to taxation is always liable to change in the future and such changes cannot be forecast. The laws of tax applicable will depend upon the individual circumstances of each customer. TSB Bank plc and TSB Bank Scotland plc are representatives of the TSB Banking Group. TSB Banking Group, TSB Bank plc, Registered Office: 16-20 September 1997, Victoria House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BZ, Fax: 0121 454 2600, TSB Bank Scotland plc, Registered Office: Henry Dundas House, Edinburgh EH2 4LW, Registered in Scotland Number 57227.

TSB PhoneBank may call you to check you have received your guide, and if you have any questions, arrange a time for you to see one of our Savings & Investment Advisers who will make sense of your savings and help protect your future with TSB.

We'd like to contact you from time to time with details about services from TSB and other TSB group companies if we think they'd interest you. However, if you'd prefer not to be told about these services, please tick this box.

To ensure security for our customers and staff and to help maintain service quality, some calls may be recorded and monitored.

TSB PhoneBank may call you to check you have received your guide, and if you have any questions, arrange a time for you to see one of our Savings & Investment Advisers who will make sense of your savings and help protect your future with TSB.

We're a member of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

TSB is a registered trademark of TSB Group plc.

Record sales keep Britain cool

If your loved one is blowing hot and cold, blame it on the heat and join the queues for a fan or an ice-cream, reports Emma Wilkins

RECORD purchases of ice-cream, electric fans and air-conditioning units are helping Britain to cope with what could be the hottest August for 300 years.

The hottest places yesterday were Heathrow and Birmingham, where the temperature reached 31C (88F). But thunderstorms brought cooler temperatures and flooding in the West, including Swindon where parts of the town centre were under 3ft of water. Fair Isle had the lowest temperature of 16C (61F).

The high humidity is putting strain on relationships already tested by the school holidays, according to Relate, the marriage guidance organisation. "Summer holidays can be a stressful time for couples," Julia Cole, a spokeswoman, said. "Spending time with the

Weather forecast, page 22

family can magnify problems. The hot weather makes this worse: because people are stressed out they are less likely to be patient and more likely to snap at their partner."

Working late may no longer be a sign of a conscientious employee: air-conditioned offices are an attractive prospect compared with a sticky journey on public transport to a home filled with fractious partners and children.

Sales of desk fans have hit record levels, according to retailers. B&Q reported sales of 17,000 fans over the weekend in its 283 branches. At one branch of the hardware chain Robert Dyas in the City of London,

181 desk fans were sold last week. Air-conditioning at home remains a luxury enjoyed by only the wealthy, with a full air-conditioning system for a large four-bedroomed home costing from £20,000 to install. Mobile units can be bought for less than £1,000 from DIY and hardware stores, but they cool only one room at a time.

The National House Builders' Federation, which represents 80 per cent of homebuilders, said air-conditioning was not fitted as standard in any new homes. However, the Heating and Ventilating Contractors' Association reported a growing interest in domestic air-conditioning. "People such as man-

aging directors, who have air-conditioning in their offices and their cars, are increasingly expecting to have it in their homes," a spokesman said. "People's expectations are rising: they want to know why they shouldn't feel more comfortable at home."

Lones Ltd, a heating systems company based in Hampstead, northwest London, said inquiries about domestic air-conditioning had risen since last summer. Roland Perring, the managing director, said his clients were generally rich and successful business people.

"We are getting more and more inquiries from customers but they tend to be people who live in the more flash properties in Hampstead," he said. "In the whole of last

year we fitted three houses with air-conditioning and this year we have already done two. It would cost in excess of £20,000 for a full system in a big Hampstead home."

"Air-conditioning is still regarded as a nice extra luxury. My office is air-conditioned and I've had it in my car for years. This year, I must admit, I have actually thought about putting it in my home for the first time."

Hampsons, the estate agent which is selling a development of 14 £295,000 flats in Fulham, southwest London, said air-conditioning was not fitted as standard in new properties. Apartments at The Square, in Parsons Green Lane, have beech floors, special dimmer light systems, double-glazing and video entryphone — but not the cool

air so vital in the summer. "A lot of American clients think it is a great shame that the new flats don't have air-conditioning," Zoe Goddard, of Hampsons, said.

"The demand is there for it, but it's still very rare to find it even in newly built flats. People who work in air-conditioned offices really miss it at home. I have gone out and bought myself a unit for my flat for £2,000 — it's wonderful," she added.

Some respite from the discomfort is expected for people living in the West, with cooler weather forecast for the next few days. But temperatures in London and the South are expected to remain high until the weekend at least, according to London Weather Centre. A spokesman said that if the present

temperatures continued, it would be the hottest August since records began in 1950.

Manchester had a more pleasant

temperature of 29C (84F) while

south coast resorts, which were cooled by sea breezes, experienced

temperatures of between 24C and

27C (75F to 81F).

Scotland, Northern Ireland and

Wales were also enjoying their

share of the sunshine with the

mercury hitting 28C in Glasgow.

Ice-cream sellers were celebrating

the hot weather after a "pains-

ful" June. Increased demand in

August looks set to push sales up to

a record £200 million this year

compared with £120 million last

year, according to the Ice-Cream

Alliance.

at

the

hat

ent

for

re

to

re

ish

he

ce

ed

ell

is

si

ed

in

he

re

is

ry

li

al

in

P

he

re

is

ry

li

al

in

Cycle wheels turned a leisure revolution

The advent of the train and the bike brought a new freedom that helped urban masses to escape the drudgery of the working week, writes Damian Whitworth

BEFORE Victoria's ascent to the throne, leisure time was rare for those at the bottom of the pile: drudgery was punctuated occasionally by religious festivals and drunken release in the gin shop. But the nation's rising prosperity bought spare time for many more of the population.

In part, the change was prompted by altruistic reformers, but there was also a commercial element: a happy and properly rested workforce was a productive workforce. That is not to say that life was easy. For the new industrial working class, hours were still long and conditions often harsh. But Factory Acts in the 1840s and 1850s reduced the length of the working day and many people were given a half day off on Saturday in addition to Sunday.

There were further cuts in the working day in the 1870s and the Prince of Wales set an example when he became more flexible about forgoing revelry on the sabbath, and threw parties on Sunday eve-



bings. The many thousands living cramped together in urban environments created a boom in public entertainment, with drama, opera and ballet flourishing in grand new theatres, and the music hall drawing huge crowds.

Perhaps the biggest change in the way that the population spent its free time was the stampede to escape the towns.

The advent of the railway gave birth to the day trip and the extended holiday. Resorts sprang up all around the coast at the end of railway lines.

Queen Victoria possibly did more than any other individual to create the British tourist industry. Her trip to the west of Scotland in 1847, for example, inaugurated the holiday industry in the area. Her

sojourns at Osborne House

began a tradition of royal promotion of the Isle of Wight, which continues today with the Royal Family's annual visits to the Cowes regatta.

The railway was not the only way to explore the countryside. Cycling quickly gained popularity once a model had been created that did not threaten serious injury to both rider and pedestrians.

Initially the adventure of the bicycle lay not in the new vistas that could be explored but in managing to stay in the saddle. After unsuccessful predecessors such as the pedalless hobby horse, the boneshaker was invented in 1868. This had wooden wheels and iron tyres and the pedals that made it the ancestor of the modern bike. It did not have a chain, however, and the ped-

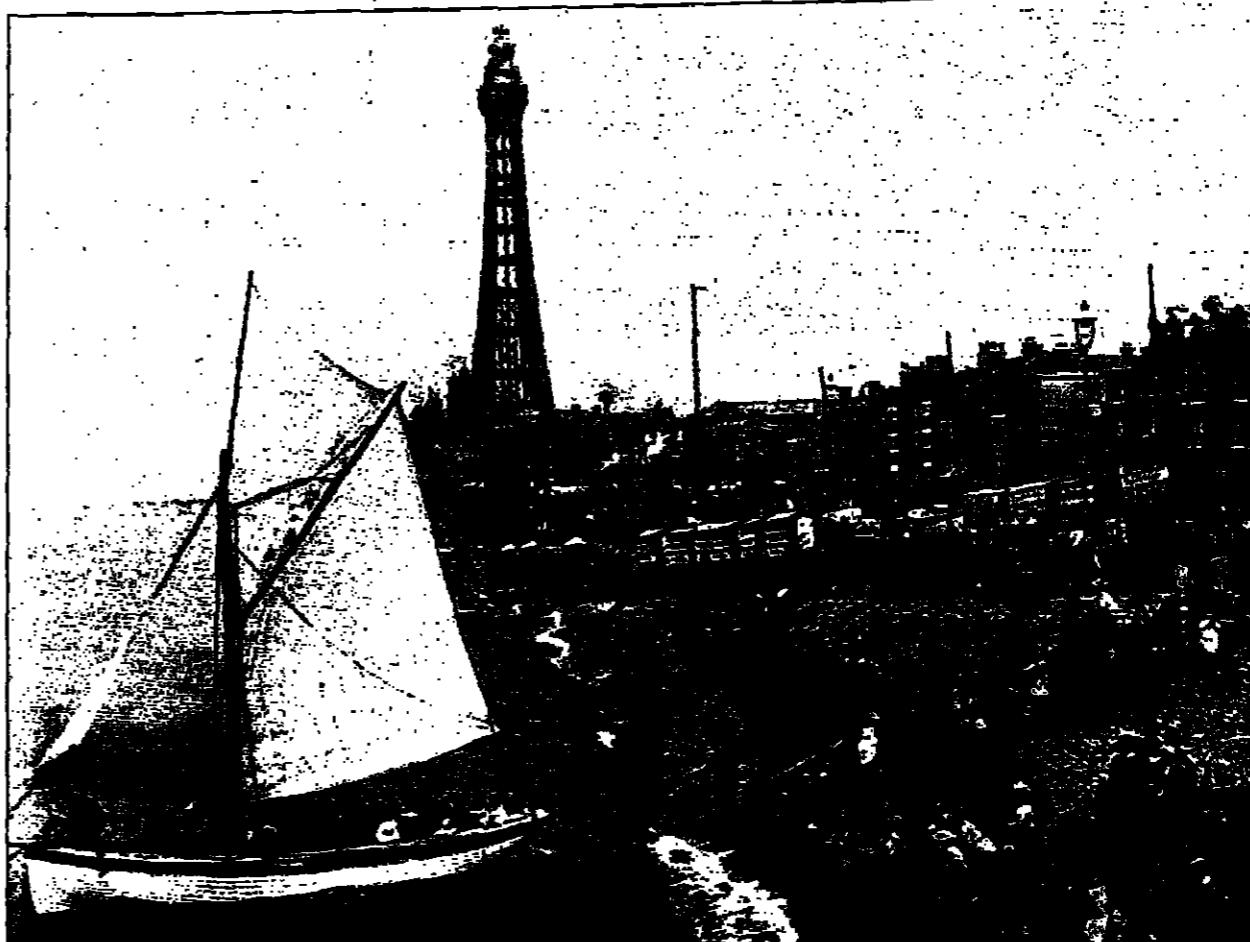
als were attached to the front wheel, which made descending hills particularly hazardous. The boneshaker was followed by the ordinary, better known as the penny-farthing, which required the rider to sit a perilous 5ft above the ground while weaving along the highway.

The first modern-looking machine was Mr Stanley's Safety Bicycle, produced by Rover from 1885. It had wheels of equal size, pedals and a chain. When Dunlop introduced pneumatic tyres in 1888, the success of bicycles was assured.

Cycling clubs sprang up across the land, with groups taking to roads that motor cars had yet to turn into dust-tracks.

By the late 1880s, cycling had become modish among women, after a revolution in undergarments that had been partly inspired by the need to pedal with modesty intact. Thick petticoats were caught by knickers. The latter were, at first, long and frilly so that if a glimpse of them were caught they might be mistaken for petticoats. The freedom of movement they afforded made them an important contribution to women's emancipation.

For those without the time, inclination or financial ability to escape the towns and cities, the creation of public parks provided open spaces for recreation. Association football and rugby gained mass appeal and W.G. Grace's



Never a dull moment: Blackpool in the 1890s, when the tower was the world's second highest building

The seaside resort that never stopped

A HUNDRED years ago Blackpool was already the boldest, brashest seaside town in Britain. Victorian entrepreneurs created a resort dedicated to the pleasure of the masses. Their vision was so clear, and the image was so strong, that holidaymakers are still flocking to enjoy the attractions.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the most intense social rivalries could find release through mallet and racket.

Cricketing success made him a national hero. These sporting pastimes were almost exclusively for men, however. The suburban middle classes sought entertainment to amuse both men and women. This was found in tennis, for which rules were laid down by a committee of the MCC in 1875, and in croquet.

Both games could be played in a large urban garden and were the focus of parties where, beneath the niceties, the

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY AUGUST 20 1997

Sale row over playing fields put out to grass

A decaying sports ground where London's children played is a test case against development, writes John Goodbody

THE playing fields which were once the pride of the Inner London Education Authority are to become the first test of the Government's policy to stop the sale of sports grounds needed by schools and communities.

The 86-acre Priest Hill sports centre in Ewell, Surrey, deserted for 15 years, once boasted 30 hard tennis courts, 18 football, nine rugby and eight hockey pitches, eight cricket squares and extensive athletics facilities. The site is one of a number of former

sports centres around London, owned by the authority, on which millions of schoolchildren, including Linford Christie, Daley Thompson and John Barnes, used to play.

But whereas the others have been preserved, Priest Hill fell into disuse in 1982, when schools stopped transporting pupils from the capital and the fields became surplus to educational requirements.

Although local schools and clubs are eager to rent the facilities, the new owners are reluctant to grant long leases

in case redevelopment plans are restricted. In the meantime, gypsies and vandals have invaded the grounds, dumping rubbish on the overgrown grass and ruined tennis courts. Trespassers have wrecked the pavilion and groundsmen's houses.

After schools stopped using the site, ownership was transferred to the Greater London Council and then to the London Residuary Body, set up to dispose of GLC property.

In 1987, Adrian Stonebridge, a local tennis coach, ran a series



The 86-acre Priest Hill site in Ewell, Surrey, has suffered from vandalism and years of neglect

of lessons for children but the LRB would not agree to a long-term commitment. In 1989, Priest Hill was sold for almost £2 million to Combined Counties Properties of Esher, which

has subsequently tried to put together a series of developments, one including a golf course and hotel, which would be financially viable and satisfy green belt regulations. Plan-

ning permission for the golf course has now expired.

The Sports Council and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council both admit that the "wasted acres" of Priest Hill are an unfortunate victim of legislation and red tape. Alan Silcock, southeast senior regional officer with the Sports Council, said: "Fifteen years of placing sport has largely been lost and still no one knows whether the site will be developed or not."

The situation has frustrated schools and residents. Peter Brooks, headmaster of Kingswood House, Epsom, said that he was seeking new playing fields. Martin Patmore, the

headmaster of Ewell Primary School, said that his school might like to lease part of the site.

Karen Sanders-Mallard, whose house borders Priest Hill, said: "We are fed up. In my nine years here, I once saw some polo being played, but nothing else."

Richard Harris, the borough community services officer, said that the council was still looking to Combined Counties Properties to put together a package which might include some commercial development but respect the green belt. No one from Combined Counties Properties was available for comment.

A spokesman for the De-

partment of Culture, Media and Sport said that the situation was regrettable. Planning controls — including the policy announced two months ago to ban the sale of playing fields — would be taken into account if any plan was called in by the Department of the Environment.

The National Playing Fields Association said yesterday that at least 258 areas of recreational land had come under threat from developer since last autumn. The association wrote to Tony Banks, the Minister for Sport, last week urging the Government to list important playing fields on the same basis as conservation areas.

ALAN Weller

M25 jambuster runs head-on into opposition

AA says route guide is dangerous, writes Peter Foster

AN ENTREPRENEUR who became so fed up with sitting in traffic jams on the M25 that he produced a guide on how to avoid them has been attacked by motoring organisations and residents living on the alternative routes he suggests.

M25 Guide, written by Neil Atkinson, a former computer software salesman, details routes for skirting congestion on the road that has been called Britain's biggest car park.

It ran into immediate opposition from the Automobile Association when it was launched yesterday. The organisation said it would endanger lives, creating dangerous rat-runs through outlying towns and villages. "We're not happy with this book at all," an AA spokesman said. "It will be dangerous because the majority of accidents occur on non-motorway routes, and increasing traffic off the M25 will just lead to more congestion and pollution in these rural areas."

People living on one of the alternative routes in Surrey, the A3044 in Staines, joined the AA in condemning the guide. Stephen and Louise Gomm, who live on the edge of the advised detour between junctions 13 and 14, said the guide would increase traffic noise and pollution on an already busy road.

Mr Gomm said he was particularly concerned for his eight-month-old twins, Leonie and Alexander. "You can see



The guide could be the first of a series

ists who had not used the road before to do so. "It is busy in rush-hour but only people who know about it take this route. With this guide things can only get worse."

Mr Atkinson, 29, from Newcastle upon Tyne, invested £40,000 in the project. Yesterday he defended his idea. "My book is just a cheaper version of satellite navigation systems already available," he said. "I understand the AA's concern, but we've been careful to use dual carriageways wherever possible and to avoid rural areas."

The idea for the guide came to him while he was working for a company in London. "I spent hours sitting on the M25 wasting time and money. A normal road atlas was too cumbersome and lacking in detail, so I decided to launch this," he said.

The guide, which costs £4, will be available from garage forecourts, bookshops, and newsagents. If it proves to be a success, Mr Atkinson plans to tackle other motorway pressure points, such as the M6 around Birmingham.

AA Roadwatch, page 22

AA Roadwatch, page

Crew brings crippled Mir back to life

BY RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW AND NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE three-man crew on Russia's crippled space station Mir restarted their computer system yesterday, restoring control of the tumbling orbiter.

"The work of the computer system is completely restored," a mission control spokeswoman said, adding that the crew would now be able to restore Mir's stable alignment with the Sun.

"The gyroscopes are not yet working," she added, referring to the system that keeps the station optimally placed to accumulate solar energy. The ageing station has to be constantly aligned towards the Sun for its solar panels to produce energy. The spokeswoman said the cosmonauts had fired the engines of their *Soyuz* spaceship to help to reorientate Mir.

According to mission control, the two Russian cosmonauts and Michael Foale, the British-born NASA astronaut, successfully located and replaced the computer component that had malfunctioned on Monday, sending the craft spinning in orbit and forcing the space station to shut off all but its life-support systems.

The next big repair work, scheduled for later this week, will involve an estimated six

space walks to repair the damage caused in June when a supply ship crashed into Mir's Spektr module. The operation is intended to repair the damaged module and to reconnect vital power cables from Spektr, disconnected after the collision.

Nevertheless, there was little optimism at the Korolyov Space Centre yesterday that the process would go according to plan, after countless mishaps and fears that cost-cutting may cause further setbacks in the days to come.

Viktor Blagov, the deputy head of mission control, complained that, while the Russian space programme used to replace key components on Mir as a matter of routine, these days replacements were only made when parts broke down. The latest computer failure was located in a part that had not been replaced since the space station was launched 11 years ago.

"We used to change Mir's computer parts after its technical life expectancy would run out, say after five years. But now due to financing we have to use them until they die." He added that Russia had had to decide whether it wanted its priority in space to be "safety or saving money".

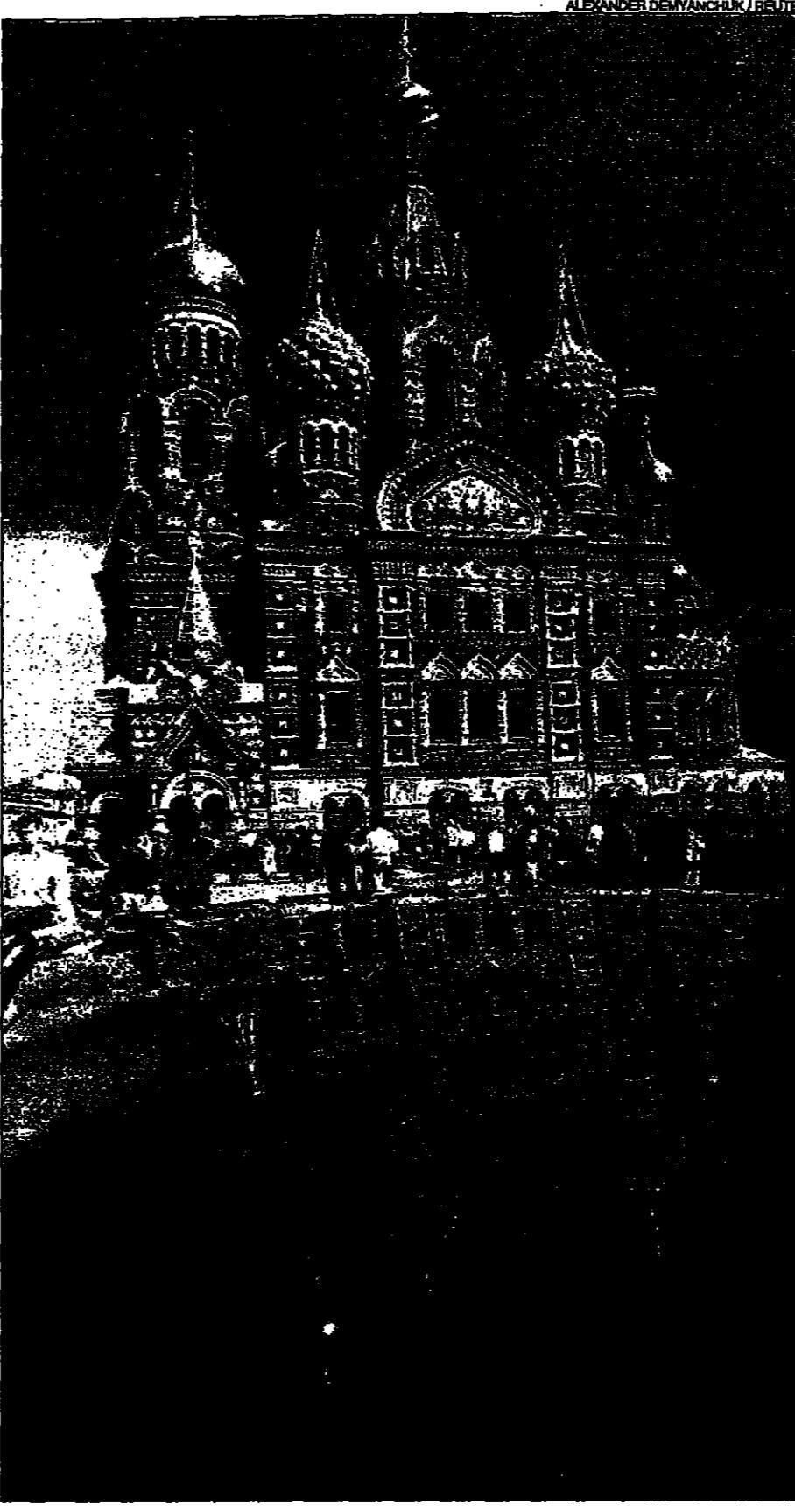
Shuttle crew returns home



The shuttle lands yesterday at the Kennedy Space Centre

Cape Canaveral: After a day's delay, the space shuttle Discovery and its crew of six returned to Earth yesterday with a satellite containing valuable information about Earth's ozone layer. It landed at Kennedy Space Centre just after sunrise, ending a 12-day mission that covered nearly 5 million miles.

The five US astronauts and one Canadian had worked with an environmental satellite, tested a robot arm for the future international space station and observed the comet Hale-Bopp. (Reuters)



St Petersburg church opens

1881. Restoration was completed on the church's exterior in 1992, but it took five more years to restore the extensive mosaic halls, stained-glass windows and marble floors which had

seriously deteriorated under Communism. The church's reopening is part of St Petersburg's campaign to establish itself as Russia's cultural capital and chief tourist destination, but the ceremony was clouded by the assassination on Monday of Mikhail Manevich, the young reformist Deputy Mayor of St Petersburg.

Krystyna Budnicka, a 65-

COMING TO A SCREEN NEAR YOU

THE TIMES

weather centre

KODAK

SKY

Shopping

INTERNET

GAMES

FAMILY TIMES

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Money Minder

You can have all this on your PC with LineOne.

An amazing world of on-line entertainment and information.

• One month's FREE membership to LineOne

• 10 hours FREE access to LineOne and the Internet

Call for your FREE software pack now on 0800 111 210



Plavsic thwarted in bid to seize police station

FROM TOM WALKER IN BANJA LUKA

AN ATTEMPT by Biljana Plavsic, the Bosnian Serb president, to take control of Banja Luka's main police station failed again yesterday, as her newly-appointed police commander was arrested by special forces loyal to Radovan Karadzic.

The balance of power in the town's confusing security apparatus became more precarious later in the day, with reports that Momcilo Krajisnik, the Serb representative on the Bosnian state presidency, and Dragan Kijac, the sacked Interior Minister, were due to arrive, apparently to stage an anti-Plavsic rally.

In the midst of the confusion British troops abandoned their watch over the "public security centre," declaring their job done, a spokesman for Nato's Stabilisation Force (SFOR) said. "Our main concern is that there is no violence or confrontation. The appointment of police officers is an entirely local matter and not of SFOR's concern," Lieutenant Colonel Mike Wright said.

The battle for control of Banja Luka police station is a microcosm of the larger political tussle between Mrs Plavsic and Mr Karadzic, who since the war has controlled Republika Srpska's security forces siphoning millions of pounds into Swiss bank accounts in the process through smuggling rackets. At last Mr Karadzic's empire seems to be crumbling, but senior policemen, many of them hand-



Plavsic special forces arrested her commander

some rewarded for their loyalty, are unsure whether to switch allegiance just yet.

"They're trying to estimate where the wind blows and who to join," said an insider at the station. "If Plavsic loses this game then she's lost the Krajina [Banja Luka] region forever, and then she's finished." The 16 opposition parties in Banja Luka made a radio appeal for the townspersons to stage a counter rally against Mr Krajisnik. "Police forces are massing in Banja Luka from all other parts of Republika Srpska," they said.

To all outward appearances it was a normal day at the police station, with officers coming and going in good humour. The street in front was still blocked off, however, and outside Mrs Plavsic's presidency building her most trusted police intelligence officer, Major Dragan Lukac,

was anxiously briefing teams of security guards. It was Major Lukac who forced Karadzic officers out of the police station on Sunday, and his special forces have become the front line of defence for Mrs Plavsic. Ironically, Major Lukac is a former bodyguard to Mr Karadzic.

He said Milan Sutilovic, the officer appointed by Mrs Plavsic to take control of the police station, had been arrested by Karadzic loyalists led by Dejan Samara, the station's previous commander. Mr Sutilovic was asked to sign a paper giving his resignation, he refused, and was said to be resting at home.

"We don't know what's happening," a duty officer said late yesterday. "Sutilovic went out and he never came back. Samara is in charge."

In a town now alive with conspiracy theories mystery also surrounded Jovo Rosic, a constitutional court judge allegedly beaten up by Karadzic forces before last week's crucial veto of Mrs Plavsic's dissolution of parliament. Confirmed by Washington and European capitals, the incident helped to bolster Mrs Plavsic's image as the anti-corruption champion to save the Dayton peace accords.

Mr Rosic allegedly received treatment in Banja Luka's Papukovac hospital since Friday, however, he has failed to appear in public. The hospital has no record of his stay, and no witness to the beating have been found.

Wiesbaden: Count Erwin Matschka Greiffenclau, the German winemaker, was found dead from a gunshot wound yesterday, the day after his family-run business declared bankruptcy. Police said he apparently shot himself in the head with his 9mm handgun.

The body of Count Matschka, 59, was found on a bench close to his Schloss

Volfrads property in Rheiingau, the Rhine valley wine-growing region west of Frankfurt. Police found a farewell letter and a will at his home.

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

The Matschka vineyards have been in the family for 21 generations. Over the past three years, however, the business fell into debt, estimated DM20 million (US\$8 million) into debt. (AP)

ged
ast's
ctims

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY AUGUST 20 1997

Taleban forces shoot refugees fleeing Kabul

FROM MICHAEL DYNES IN JABAL-OS-SIRAJ

TALIBAN fighters are shooting unarmed civilians fleeing the besieged city of Kabul, according to refugees crossing the front line into territory held by forces loyal to Ahmed Shah Masood, the leader of the "Northern Alliance".

Hundreds of men, women and children have taken refuge in the Qulai Chanor valley, a barren waste between the Taleban and alliance front lines near the old road to Kabul east of the Taleban-held village of Hussen Kot.

May people attempt to make the arduous crossing at night when there is less chance of being spotted by Taleban gunners. But people spotted by Taleban patrols are shot to prevent them from joining the forces of the alliance, witnesses said.

Khak Bismillah, an elderly man, said Taleban fighters were behaving like barbarians. "This is not Islamic," he said with tears in his eyes. "They are holding people in the middle of nowhere, with no food or water, and then shooting at them."



Zabulian, 20, said it took him two days to trek from Kabul to alliance-held territory. "I waited in the hills for a day and a half before I thought it was safe to pass," he said. Anyone who crosses over without permission is shot at.

From the alliance front line yesterday morning a trickle of refugees, who had managed to

escape, could be seen in the distance, making their way down the mountain into the mud-walled villages of the Shomali Valley below.

Villages and towns all along the old road from Hussen Kot to Jabal-OS-Siraj have borne the brunt of intense artillery exchanges over the past ten months, and have changed hands several times.

What were once tightly knit, mud-walled village systems, housing vineyards and elaborate irrigation systems, have been so comprehensively bombed that they now resemble giant termite mounds.

The towns of Charikar and Jabal-OS-Siraj, which even a year ago supported thousands of inhabitants and thriving bazaars, now look like the set for a *Mad Max* film. The few who remain here eke out a living, from peddling cigarettes, farm produce and feeding and sheltering General Masood's *Mujahidin* fighters returning from the front line.

Almost 20 years of war and civil war have spawned a robust make-do-and-mend

culture among the Shomali Valley's war-weary people.

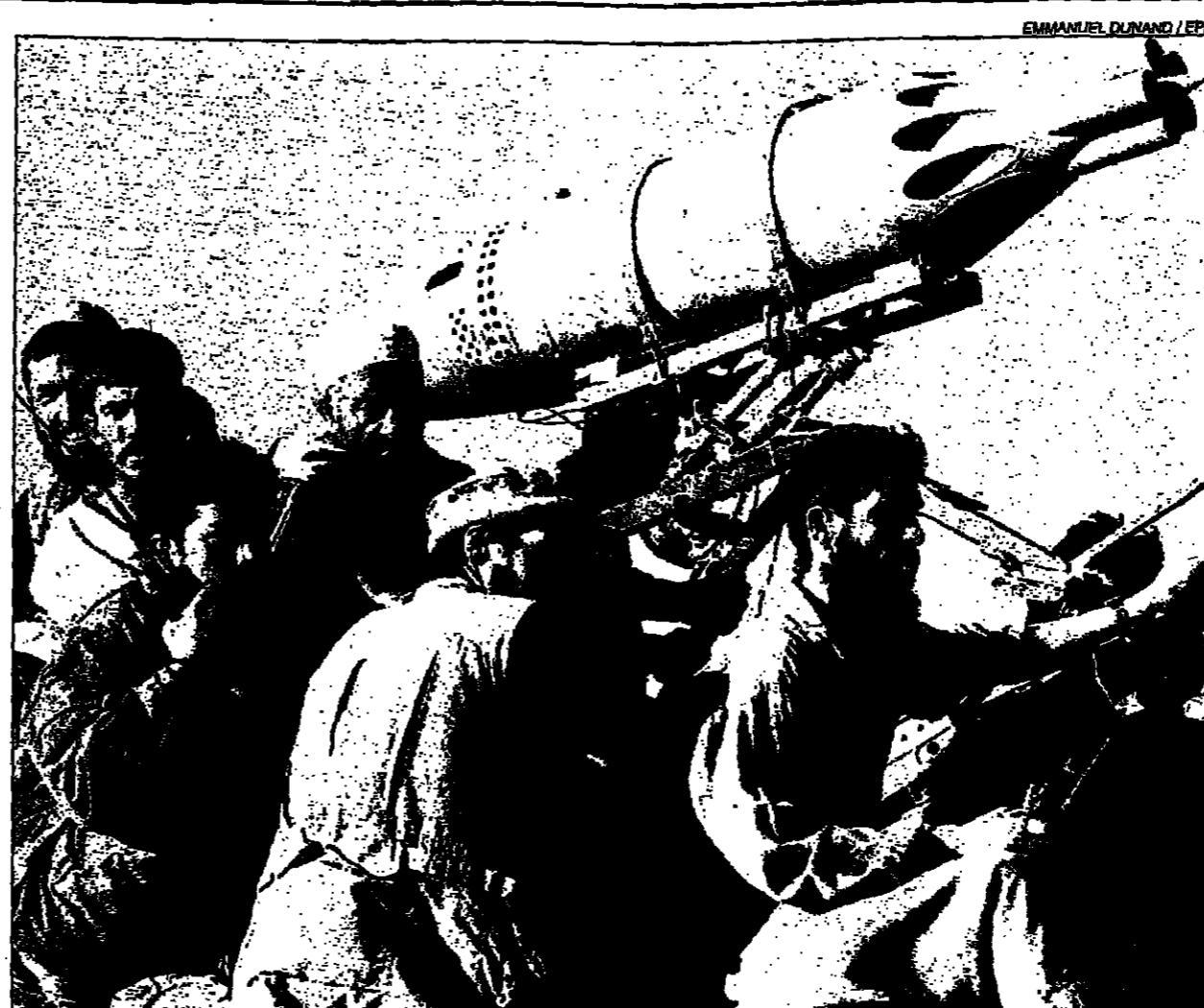
Parts of cars, tanks and broken machinery are regularly cannibalised to make or repair water pumps, generators or even fashion weapons of war.

Yesterday we saw the astonishing sight of an armoured

personnel carrier on its way to the front equipped with a rocket-launcher pod from a helicopter-gunsight.

valley was lit by tracer fire from anti-aircraft guns. What we thought was the start of the final push against the Taleban turned out to be merely "happy fire". The people of the Shomali were celebrating the day they won independence from Britain in 1919.

□ Kabul: Taleban have outlawed production and consumption of cannabis and heroin. state-run Radio Sharq said. Offenders were threatened with full Islamic punishment. But it did not mention opium, Afghanistan's largest drug crop. (AFP)



Anti-Taleban fighters ride in an armoured personnel carrier with a rocket-launcher pod from a helicopter-gunsight

Singapore Prime Minister clashes with QC in libel case

ROM ANDREW DRUMMOND
IN SINGAPORE

GEORGE CARMAN QC yesterday accused Goh Chok Tong, the Prime Minister of Singapore, of demeaning the dignity of his office, creating a climate of fear in the island state, and leaking leaks against himself, perhaps to claim for aggravated damages.

The Prime Minister flushed in the witness box at Singapore High Court as the British lawyer accused him of paying lip-service to democracy, using his office to control the courts and manipulating the Singapore press. Mr Carman said that

by suing in multiple actions for damages, Mr Goh could bankrupt opposition MPs so that they could never again stand for office.

"That's up to the court to decide," the Prime Minister replied. "I am sorry you have lost your temper." He denied all Mr Carman's allegations.

In the heated courtroom contest the judge and Thomas Shields QC, for the Prime Minister, intervened several times to ask Mr Carman to refrain from personal comment.

"I suggest to you that you and Lee Kuan Yew... and you learnt from him by being his willing and able apprentice... have learnt how to

play the political system. You pay lip service only to the full rights of democracy," Mr Carman said. "You create in the minds of people in Singapore a climate of fear. You say you believe in the principles of freedom of speech and freedom of the courts, but there comes a point when you adapt them for your own purposes to stay in power and stifle opposition." Mr Goh, Mr Lee and nine other members of the ruling

\$600,000 (£572,000) and been vindicated, but you want more."

Under cross-examination, the

Prime Minister said that this year had been a good year. "Has your standing as a leader been diminished?" Mr Carman asked. "No,"

Mr Goh answered. Earlier Mr Goh

agreed that to have an Opposition was "a valuable gift". He said he valued freedom of speech, freedom of the press and total independence of the courts. He said he would never get political opponents out by backdoor means.

Mr Carman said: "Over the years led by the Senior Minister [Mr Lee], and by you in recent years, the court

has been turned to on occasion, not for normal legitimate claims but to use as a weapon against opponents."

He added: "This is an ill-conceived action. In almost any part of the Commonwealth a judge and jury would treat this case as no more than the cut and thrust of political electioneering."

Mr Carman said that Mr Jayaraman's comments did not mean that the Prime Minister and 11 other people were guilty of criminal offences. "If that is what this court finds, we are living in an Alice in Wonderland world."

The case continues.

Sikh leaders urge Queen to include Amritsar on tour

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

INDIA'S mainstream Sikh leaders are rallying behind proposals for the Queen to visit Amritsar and the Golden Temple, their holiest shrine. They have promised an enthusiastic welcome and pledged not to seek an apology for the massacre of nearly 400 people by British troops in 1919.

It appears unlikely, however, that the Queen will visit the city during her six-day state visit to India, beginning in mid-October. On her way to the Golden Temple she would have to pass the alley that leads to a small open space, Jallianwala Bagh, where the massacre happened. Hardline Sikh leaders could seek to mount demonstrations and embarrass the Queen for domestic political gain.

Guiraran Singh Tohra, leader of the SGPC, the main

Shik organisation, appealed to the Queen to visit Amritsar. He said he "regretted" a suggestion by Indian Kumar Singh, the Indian Prime Minister, that she should drop her visit to the city in view of controversy over demands for her to apologise for the Jallianwala Bagh killings.

The Ministry of External Affairs in Delhi has said that in order to ensure that important relations with a very friendly country are insulated from controversy, the Government has drawn the attention of the British Government to sentiments being expressed about the proposed visit to Amritsar.

Some Sikh leaders accused the Indian Government of trying to scuttle the visit to Amritsar to deny Sikhs the "honour" of the Queen's pres-

ence. They noted that the Indian Government had not apologised for the attack on the Golden Temple in 1984, when it flushed out armed militants who had taken it over. The badly damaged temple is still being repaired.

Meanwhile, the Punjab state government has laid claim to the lost treasures of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the founder of the Sikh empire, including the Koh-i-Noor diamond — the centrepiece of the Queen Mother's Crown. The main collection is believed to have been traced to a Swiss bank vault. Kuldip Nayar, a former Indian High Commissioner to London, has also called for the India Office Library, part of the British Library, to be given to India.

Leading article, page 15

BANK OF SCOTLAND BANKING DIRECT® INTEREST RATE CHANGE

With effect from 20th August 1997, interest rates payable on the undernoted account have changed.

BANKING DIRECT INSTANT ACCESS
SAVINGS ACCOUNT

Balances of £5,000 and above

5.00

Balances under £5,000

5.00

BANK OF SCOTLAND
BANKING DIRECT®
0500 804 804

Gross - The annual rate of interest payable without the deduction of lower rate tax to eligible non-tax-payers. Interest payable annually (monthly option available). Interest rates subject to variation. Bank of Scotland Banking Direct and ® are registered trademarks of The Governor and Company of the Bank of Scotland.

SNAP THIS UP FOR THE FAMILY!

FREE



COMPARE OUR SPEC NOW
YOU WON'T FIND A
BETTER PRICE
ANYWHERE!



TINY 200 HOME STUDIO™ SYSTEM

- Intel 200MHz Pentium® processor with MMX™ technology
- 32MB SD RAM
- 3.5GB IDE Hard Disk Drive
- 15" SVGA Colour Monitor
- 4MB 3-D Graphics Card
- 12 speed CD ROM
- Wavelet 32 Soundcard
- 33.6bps Fax/Modem
- Lexmark 2050 Photo-ready Colour Inkjet Printer
- FREE Agfa Digital Camera
- Windows 95
- Huge software bundle

£1399
£1643

ex VAT
inc VAT

£1399

Mother's little liquid helper

It's not boredom that makes them reach for a nice cold alcopop, says Maureen Freely

The husband leaves in the morning and the wife is glad to hear the door close behind him. She is free; the children go to school; she is alone; she attends to a thousand small tasks; her hands are busy, but her mind is empty; what plans she has are for the family. She lives only for them. It relieves her *anxiet* when they return. Her husband used to bring her flowers, a little present, but how foolish this would seem now... The evening is dull; reading, radio, desultory talks; each remains alone under cover of this intimacy. The wife wonders with hope or apprehension whether tonight – at last – 'something will happen'. She goes to sleep disappointed... and it is with pleasure that she will hear him slam the door next morning.

This is how Simone de Beauvoir described the housewife's lot in 1949. It is a triumph of negative advertising; read it and you easily forget that the job came with perks, too. A stay-at-home wife had some status in those days. She did not live in isolation. She had plenty of adult company – half the human race, in fact. She might have resented her exclusion from public life, but at least she could turn on that radio and hear pompous politicians ask each other: 'How will this important new decision affect the Housewife?' No one bothers to take the part of the Housewife now. With the possible exception of Richard and Judy, no one outside the world of market research seems aware that they even exist. Little wonder, then, that they've sunk to drinking alcopops.

This news comes to us care of John Philpot, managing director of the Split Drinks Company. Earlier this month he told a government inquiry that its alcopop, Jammin', was most popular with bored housewives: 'who like to have a drink during the day, but who had qualms about smelling of alcohol.' With Jammin', he said, 'they can enjoy a drink on the quiet without their husbands knowing.' Ministers at the inquiry are said to have been nonplussed at his cheeky comments. One government minister, a女士, while not mentioning the company, Turning Point, expressed concern that drinks' companies might be pushing bored housewives into alcoholism.

In the old days, things were more

It's more likely that the alcopop barons were using bored housewives as a guinea-pig. Independent research unveiled at a national seminar on alcopops this week confirmed that they continue to be popular with the under-aged and that they are packaged to appeal not to housewives but to ravers – a wise strategy, in view of other research showing that single women (in the 16-24 and 35-44 brackets) drink more than married women of any age. This is not to say that drink is never a problem with housewives. Certainly 24-year-old Amanda Ryan-McCurdy wouldn't say it she has to appear in court this week after police found her driving 13 children in her Ford Escort while more than twice over the drink-drive limit.

The alcohol in her bloodstream, it seems, was from a party the night before. Most of the children belonged to neighbours who for one reason or another had not managed to collect them from a football match. It all sounds very odd and worrying – especially as the children in question were between six months and four years in age. Clearly there is a problem here – but is it fair to call it boredom? It's not a word housewives themselves use when bemoaning their lot. The ones I know complain instead about being run off their feet, stepped on and taken for granted.

When they have very young children to justify their 'unemployed' status, they can at least draw from a large pool of sympathetic listeners. But by the time their children reach school age, most of their confidantes will have defected back to work. From then on they will be 'just dashing out the door' when their stay-at-home friends ring them in the morning, 'unable to speak for long' when they ring them at the office, and too tired to speak at all in the evening.

If housewives with school-age children are to have any adult contact at all during normal working hours, they must befriend women with whom they have nothing in common. Nothing, that is, except for the complex web of jumble sales, village fêtes, playgroups, school runs, ballet lessons, doctors' visits, and urgent errands that make their lives so fraught.

In the old days, things were more



Solitary drinking can be dangerous, but housewives are not children, and an alcopop does not equal perdition

relaxed because half the human race did this sort of unpaid work. Now that the domestic sphere has been downsized, the burden every individual housewife has to carry is much, much heavier. They are forever finding themselves in situations where they just can't say no.

The worst part, they say, is that people think they're doing you a favour by keeping you busy. 'It will get you out of the house,' head teachers say when they lumber you with the promises auction. 'It will be a nice change of scene,' husbands and in-laws say, when they need a lift to an airport on the other side of the country. Then, when you get them there, they ask: 'When are you going back to do some

proper work?' I doubt anyone would have dared say that to one of Simone's housewives.

The worst offenders in this regard, my friends tell me, are housewife-turned-workaholics like me. We understand, you see, but oh so condescendingly. So every time they admit to us some common-or-garden adult discontent – a snippy husband, a wayward teenager – we tell them how much less 'dependent' and 'enmeshed' they will be if they find some way to 'use' their minds.

It's this sort of friendly advice that sends so many housewives scrambling for alibis. They start talking frantically about the courses they might take, the interior

decorating businesses they'll be setting up after they've run nine marathons. Hobbies that used to be pleasures now become badges.

'I don't work, but I sometimes repair harpsichords,' they say. Or, 'I was reading such a fascinating philosopher yesterday after I did six hours in my vegetable garden.' Why isn't it enough to say that they are proud to have created households that are all of a piece, and that plenty of people benefit from their being on call 24 hours a day?

If women's work in the home has no status, and seems to the outside world to have no purpose, it's partly – a practitioner at the Women's Therapy Link tells me

– because it has no name. 'It's not called management and it's not an art or a craft' – and especially in the middle classes it's often assumed to be expendable. Perhaps this explains why so many housewives I know suffer from depression, and why, as they grow older, they become so worried about 'being replaced'. All too often, their fears come true.

That's my theory, anyway, about that po-faced Chanel mother a friend spotted knocking back glasses of whisky at the pub next to her children's school. Not to mention the agitated blonde with a Spacewagon full of children who beat her to a phone booth at my health club to spend 40 minutes telling some man no one had made her feel 'this way' since she'd married 'that bastard'.

My health club attracts housewives of all ages. Some of the older ones also heard snippets of the conversation, and in the changing room later they did a lot of communal eyebrow raising. They thought the woman was a disgrace to the calling because they do see a purpose in their lives. As do all their families: they are forever racing off to distant continents to meet their children's childcare emergencies. They do so many favours for everyone else, myself included, that they should register as charities.

August is a particularly difficult month, because of all those family visits. They won't have a simple meal, I heard one woman complain. 'My son says, "what shall we eat?" I say, "what about boil-in-the-bag fish?" He and his wife cry, "oh no Mum, we must have pesto and pesto that and walnut oil for the salad." And off we go to Sainsbury's to buy all those little jars...'

Another woman had just shocked her vegetarian daughter-in-law by serving a jelly ('How was I to know there was bone marrow in gelatine?'). A third confessed she had come for a swim to get away from her retired husband (they all sigh when anyone mentions a retired husband) who had gone haywire with their new Dyson. 'It's not just that he was vacuuming all night,' she wailed. 'It's his only topic of conversation. How many dog hairs it had picked up in the last hour. What I'd missed last time in the far corner. How filthy the house must have been before he came to the rescue. I was tempted to remind him how long I'd been asking for a new vacuum cleaner, but I didn't like to say, "They never do, which may explain why some might decide to treat themselves to Prozac, Valium, or a nice, cold cocktail.'

'It's how I reward myself when everything's organised and I've done my day's work,' one housewife friend tells me. Her poison is Hooch, and she always has 'one or two' lurking at the back of the refrigerator. 'And what's wrong with that?' Granted, it is dangerous to get into the habit of secret, solitary drinking. But housewives are not children, and an alcopop does not equal perdition. It seems unfair to expect them to proclaim the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about their every little drinkie while remaining otherwise discreet and self-effacing. Unfair and unwise. Just imagine how we'd all suffer if they stopped 'taking the edge off things' – and felt compelled by their new sharp focus to say what they thought.

Language lesson + Women's business + Adding to the shame + Stars split

The linguistic sex bullies

THE late Kingsley Amis was always scathing about Welsh people's insistence on having words spelt out in their own language. I remember him, at a Spectator lunch, expatiating wonderfully – with characteristically eloquent ire – on the idiocy of the signs for 'Taxis' underneath, and presumably to clarify, the signs for 'Taxi' when, as he pointed out, there was hardly any room for confusion as it was.

He chose to miss the point, to refuse to see the argument as 'political' rather than linguistic, or indeed, to acknowledge that the two are inevitably intertwined. He shared something here with the Post-Moderns, to whom he most appositely did not belong, in his apparent acceptance of the transparency of language. Words are involved with a meaning other than the one they obviously signify; they are not just ciphers.

We know what the Welsh mean by spelling taxi taxi. If we are being honest, we also know that the Equal Opportunities Commission is about in trying to get rid of gender distinctions in what is a gender-distinguishing language, but I wish we could hear the elder Amis's opinions on it. Too late for that, of course, and I acknowledge we know, too, what they'd be.

In theory, there is much to

splutter about. The idea of the EOC telling the Welsh to mend their sexist ways and change their noun-endings accordingly is, on initial reading, astonishing. This is not because I pooh-pooh the idea of language being sexist; it is sexist. One isn't particularly sexist, we have merely the problem of universal and supposedly neutral application of the

rule of 'gender neutrality'. The Pope is being implored to 'upgrade' the Vir-

Nigella Lawson

male pronoun to bother our pretty little heads about – but, even at age 12 I remember the justified irritation about being told by my French teacher that the male always takes precedence.'

And don't let anyone tell you that such things do not signify. Of course they do – and I advise you to buy a copy of Dale Spender's *Man Made*.

male pronoun to bother our pretty little heads about – but, even at age 12 I remember the justified irritation about being told by my French teacher that the male always takes precedence.'

But linguistically, the Welsh have more of a prob-

lem than most. It's not just that, like the Germans, they have different words for a man and a woman doing the same thing (*Lehrer* and *Lehrerin* being the German and Welsh, respectively, for a male teacher, *Lehrerin* or *Lehrer* for a female one), which the modern sensibility cannot tolerate, but that, in some cases, only a male form exists. There are no female forms for doctor or solicitor, for example. And so the EOC has asked Welsh academics to see how newer forms might be evolved.

I believe in the organic development of language you cannot bully anyone into 'correct usage', since correct usage is, by definition, how language is being used. But here some genteel judging might be in order. I welcome in our own language the use of the singular 'they', purely on the ground that it is better than 'him or her' – and for all my linguistic tolerance, I shrink from the use of him to include her.

But before anyone gets too worked up about 'politically correct usage', they should remember two things: none of this is to be enforced – we are talking, politically, guidelines here; and there is only one test: the everyday use of language itself. Such matters are unarguably democratic let the people speak.

A graceless Kelly

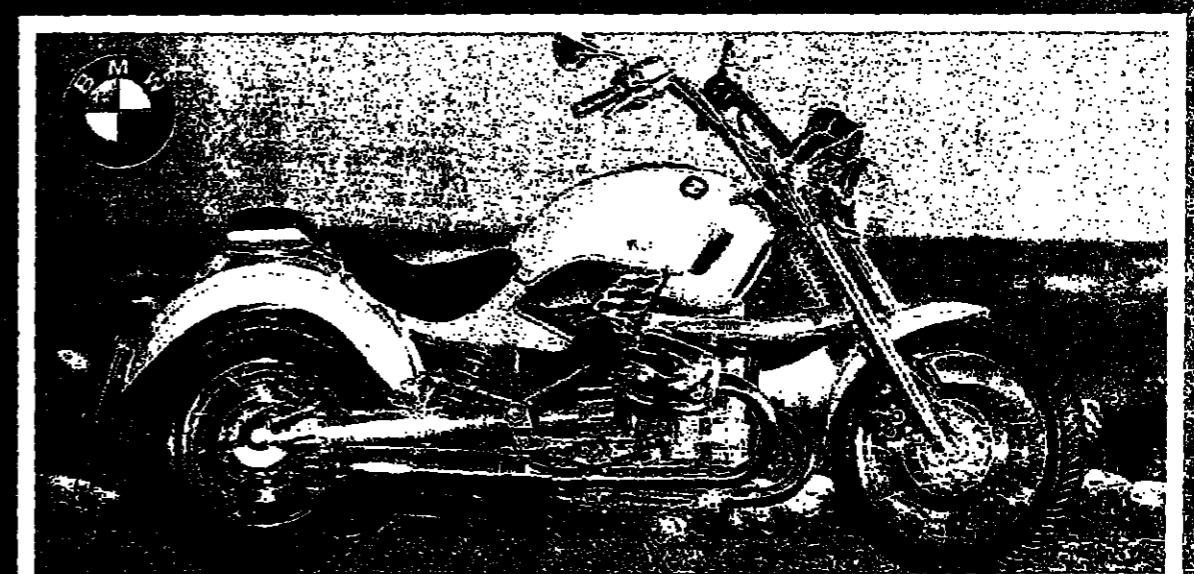
IT makes no sense for Kelly Fisher to accuse Dodi Fayed of humiliating her. Until she made her stand, only her friends were privy to her humiliation – now, the whole world is. Have some people no shame? And apart from money, what can she hope to gain from all this? If she thinks she will win our sympathy, she is severely misguided. All is not fair in love, and the more she tells us how ill she was used, the less we all think of her.

There is some shame in being dumped, there is almost a smell about it. To draw attention to it is to add to the stench. Ms Fayed's ex-wife says Ms Fisher told her she had dumped him: how much better she would be feeling now if she'd stuck to that story.

Thomas Mann wrote (in the book that was my teenage passion, *Tonio Kröger*): 'He who loves the most is the inferior and must suffer.' I know this is an adolescent insight, but that's how we all feel. Ms Fisher arouses our contempt not, fairly, because she's milking this situation for all its financial worth, but unfairly, because in protesting her love, she's convincing us of her inferiority.

► REWARDING TIMES

WIN A BMW CRUISER WORTH OVER £10,000



This week, *The Times*, in association with BMW Motorcycles, gives you the chance to win the new R1200C, the first Cruiser motorcycle ever produced by BMW, worth more than £10,000. Our winner will also receive free BMW Insurance up to the value of £750.

This stylish bike provides a novel mixture of leading edge technology with distinctive Cruiser design. It has high raked handle bars and low

seat, a flat twin Boxer engine for extra torque plus an innovative Telelever front suspension system and Monolever rear suspension. It is a bike with style and attitude ideal for the open road. And that is not all.

Cruiser World also has a



TOKYO

THE TIMES/BMW CRUISER COMPETITION ENTRY FORM

Send this form with four differently numbered tokens to arrive by September 12, 1997, to:

The Times/BMW Cruiser Competition, Freepost BMW, PO Box 161, Croydon CR9 1QB.

Full name

Address

Postcode

Daytime tel

Do you have a motorcycle licence? Yes No

Current motorcycle owned?

Registration letter / year

Month

Year

When are you thinking of changing your motorcycle?

IT WOULD HELP US IF YOU ANSWERED THESE QUESTIONS:

Which of the following age groups do you fall into? (Please tick box)

15-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-75+

Which national daily newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (4-5 copies) each week?

The Times The Sun The Mirror The Daily Mail The Daily Express The Sunday Times The Sunday Mirror The Sunday Express

Which national Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (2-4 copies) a month?

The Sunday Times The Sunday Mirror The Sunday Express The Sunday Mail The Sunday Sun

If you would prefer not to receive information from BMW, please tick

If you would prefer not to receive information and offers from organisations carefully selected by *The Times*, please tick

Mandarin of the mandarins

Sue Cameron on the task ahead for the new Cabinet Secretary

Of all the decisions which Tony Blair took in his first 100 days, few will have more significance for at least the next 1,000 than his selection of Sir Richard Wilson to take over as Britain's most powerful civil servant.

Sir Richard will inherit a Whitehall torn between triumphalism and deep unease. Elation springs from the hope that Tony Blair's presidential style could mark the start of a golden age for the Civil Service.

Central control and closed-door committees plus a lack of dogmatism on policy issues, offers senior officials the chance to enjoy greater influence than they have had for decades. Yet new Labour's approach to politics could lead as easily to traditional civil servants being marginalised, their role usurped by outsiders more congenial to ministers.

Sir Richard, who will succeed Sir Robin Butler in the twin posts of Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Home Civil Service, stands to become the guide and confidant of a young Prime Minister lacking in any ideological underpinning. If he can deliver on the policy front, Whitehall's prestige and importance will be greatly enhanced. More problematical for the Civil Service is Mr Blair's style of government — the shifting of the political debate away from the public arena to the conference rooms of Whitehall, where it can be better controlled by No 10.

Madam Speaker has already started voicing publicly her concern at the way the Government has been previewing major announcements to the media before telling the Commons — so maximising the influence of spin-doctors and minimising that of MPs. Meanwhile, ministers have been ordered formally to clear every speech and every media lunch with No 10.

And the invitation to the Liberal Democrats to sit on a Cabinet committee discussing constitutional issues will effectively gag them. They will be required to observe confidentiality on all business discussed in the committee. Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown will be unable even to tell his backbenchers when he agrees or — more important — disagrees with Mr Blair.

At first sight all this may seem to be tailor-made for Whitehall. If the politicians encounter problems in hammering out consensus deals behind closed doors, help will be at hand from Sir Richard with the massed ranks of the senior Civil Service shimmering at his back.

The civil servants will love it, says Professor Peter Hennessy, doyen of Whitehall watchers. "For years most of them have been going to Brussels regularly and they've honed their brokering skills over there. Now they'll be able to use them here."

There is a potential downside in all this for Whitehall.

Sir Richard stands to become Blair's confidant

Two other directors of information have also been sent on gardening leave, a Civil Service euphemism for suspension. Their departure may be coincidence or the result of clumsy handling. Or it may be the start of a purge that goes far beyond press officers. What is certain is that the fate of the Whitehall Three will send a frisson around the Civil Service.

Sir Richard will play a crucial role in deciding the fate of his own Whitehall troops and of the Blair Government itself. Before he takes over in the new year, he will have the chance to influence a number of key Whitehall appointments.

Some half a dozen Permanent Secretary posts — the top Civil Service jobs in each department — are becoming vacant. This will give Sir Richard the chance to strengthen links to new Labour ministers and to put his own stamp on Whitehall. He might then start to see who is going to mould whom.

Mad idea

JUST when it seemed that there were no more Tory clothes left for new Labour to steal, there comes bewildering news from right-wing think-tank the Adam Smith Institute. Madsen Pirie, the institute's president, is volunteering to become Tony Blair's new chief policy wonk.

Pirie, who disclosed his love affair with Labour in *The Times*, now says he is throwing his hat

into the ring for the job of head of the Downing Street policy unit. The post has remained unfilled since Labour came to power and the hunt for a suitable recruit has turned into a convoluted saga with both Bob Ayling, chief executive of British Airways, and Rachel Lomax, Permanent Secretary at the Welsh Office, linked to the job but not appointed.

Pirie, who is a youthful 56 with a penchant for rollerblading and bow-ties, fancies following in the footsteps of Sarah, now Baroness, Hogg and the just ennobled Norman Blackwell, who served under John Major.

"I'm offering my services because I believe that the key to the job is creativity and the ability to think of innovative ways to achieve Labour's aims," says Pirie. "I'm not a Tory. I'm not a member of any political party." A Downing Street spokesman gives no inkling as to how Pirie's offer has gone down in the Blair camp. "It is not for us to comment on individual candidates."

News of Labour's victory appears to have been slow reaching some corners of the Tory party. An



Shades of the Old Vic

Every time a theatre closes, a little something in us dies. Other arts are closet passions. In a theatre the community cries and laughs collectively. It argues, hopes and is afraid. Shut a concert hall and you amputate a cultural limb. Close a theatre and you lobotomise the soul.

Or so people would have us believe. Once again in its 180-year history, London's most famous theatre, the Old Vic, is "under threat". Its benefactors of the past 15 years, the Mervishes of Toronto, are putting the place up for sale in December. The new company formed by Sir Peter Hall will have strutted just one brief season on its stage. Pending a buyer — and theatre millionaires this week denied all interest — the old lady of Waterloo will again wear widow's weeds.

Does it matter? The Vic was always a commercial monster. It was built after the opening of Waterloo Bridge in 1818 to bring glamour to the South Bank marshes. Streets such as The Cut and Lower Marsh reflected its grim environs. The first owner was the stagestruck son of a rich merchant, Joseph Glossop. He had to supply flares and foot patrols to defend visitors from rats the size of dogs and from bands of pickpockets and garrulous. When Hazlitt came to a performance, he declared to the audience mostly "prostitutes and mountebanks".

The Vic's most famous era was in the first half of this century under Lilian Baylis. She had a talent for staging popular classics while also balancing the books. "Lord God send me a good actor, but send him cheap," was her motto. She never watched the plays, but by launching the careers of the greatest names in 20th-century drama, Baylis invested the Old Vic with an aura of invincibility that has lasted ever since. Who could bring down a curtain on a stage that had echoed to Laughton, Neville, Burton, Richardson, Olivier, Redgrave, Evans, Gielgud?

Acting is the only profession that requires its practitioners to believe in ghosts. I was a member of the Old Vic board in the pre-Mervish years and lost count of the producers who would plead for an overspend by citing the shades of the past. All seemed to believe, with Baylis, that an Old Vic director was directly inspired by Almighty God. Although God was mysteriously bereft of an Arts Council grant, His beaming bowl was supposedly, irreducibly, Baylis

eventually ruined the Old Vic when divine revelation told her that "My People must have the best and God tells me that the best in theatre is grand opera."

After the war, Olivier's National Theatre brought the Vic subsidised salvation, until he left for his new Thames-side palace in 1976. From then until the arrival of the Mervishes, the Vic stumbled from crisis to crisis.

When other West End theatres were under threat of mass closure in the Sixties, the response was extraordinary — and not just from theatre people. The demolition of the St James's Theatre behind the Ritz and the Gaiety in the Aldwych saw packed and furious demonstrations.

These darkened buildings were sacred, as if the Muse of Drama was locked inside and facing extinction. There followed a swift campaign to list most West End theatres as historic. Since then, I cannot think of a single established theatre that has shut for good. Actors and writers are replaceable, but theatres go on for ever.

This mystique extends beyond the living stage. Total hysteria surrounded the discovery of wooden supports of the Tudor Rose theatre on the South Bank in 1989. The response of the profession, led by Peggy Ashcroft and Ian McKellen, was that of pilgrims with a fragment of the true cross: "On this very spot the immortal Bard must have trod his hour..." they cried, pleading for nobody to touch it. They regarded it as a theatrical war grave. The "immortal" patch was left undisturbed under an office block at a public cost of £1 million. This was pure professional idolatry.

London theatres are the only secular buildings whose past use is given statutory protection irrespective of market circumstances. A sign over the stage door of the Palace Theatre makes the point emphatically: "The world's greatest artists have passed and will pass through these doors." Actors are invited to become

acolytes. Theatres are shrines, holy ground encumbered with saints and martyrs.

This antiquarianism seems at odds with the vitality of "live" theatre. The glory of drama is that it can be staged anywhere. This week in Edinburgh companies are performing in church halls, pubs, garages, private flats, even the street. Some audiences may need Shakespeare's Wooden O to "hold the very casques that did affright the air at Agincourt". The plays themselves need no such prop.

Shakespeare's plays-within-plays were content with the Elstree banqueting hall, the Forest of Arden or Quince's "this green plot our stage, this hawkethorn brake our living house". They needed no National Lottery grant.

Most actors and directors curse the buildings in which

they are expected to perform, new as well as old. Backstage conditions at the modern Barbican and National Theatres are Hades. Seating at most fringe theatres is backbreaking. Old auditoriums contrive to suppress all but shouted lines, while amplifying the slightest audience cough.

Visiting a West End theatre can be a miserable experience, forcing writing and acting to work ever harder. Perhaps the quality of the London stage is due to this need to triumph over physical adversity.

Yet I admit the central argument.

Buildings do relate to the activities to which they give shelter. Parliamentarian argument is influenced by the shape of the debating chamber. Religious ritual interacts with church architecture. A palace occupied by a monarch has an aura that is absent from a museum. I cannot visit the Albert Hall, or Canterbury Cathedral, or the House of Commons, or even the Savoy Hotel, and treat these buildings as mere inhabited archaeology. We fight to save old buildings not just because we like looking at them. We fight because they do hold ancestral spirits. Yesterday's cast lists are lustre to today's need to triumph over physical adversity.

Money is not the problem of the London stage. The problem is in

locating it. Theatres are like racehorses, yachts and quality newspapers. They operate in a market for unquantifiable and intangible rewards.

Theatrical benefactors are

longstanding players in this market,

though at present sparse. Their

reward is curious. They seek commun

ion with ghosts. But the Old Vic is

lucky in having ghosts, and to spare.

Simon Jenkins

ly repair problem." The paving guests will enjoy a lakeside location and the chance to train their binoculars on the Queen, who regularly stays at Highclere while visiting Newbury races.

Snapped up

WHATEVER is on offer in Edinburgh, surely the strangest art exhibition of the moment is at the Blackfriars Arts Centre in Boston, Lincolnshire. The subject is John Redwood, Shadow President of the Board of Trade. Back in February

Folly paid

THE Queen's racing manager, the Earl of Carnarvon, is introducing paying guests to his Hampshire estate, Highclere. They will be housed in an 18th-century folly, which is being converted into a three-bedroom holiday home by the Landmark Trust at the cost of half a million pounds. The Trust will be allowed to lease the building. "The estate does not have the money to repair these buildings," says the estate architect, Michael Carden. "The Earl won't get anything out of it except solving his

the Boston Monochrome Society took it upon themselves to photograph the Tory MP and reported Vulcan as he toured Marshall's vegetable processing plant at nearby Butterwick. Now dozens of prints feature him in various poses, with all manner of vegetables and sporting a white protective coat bearing the word "Visitor". "It's flattering," says Redwood of the show, before hastily making a Euro-point: "The Brussels came from Lincolnshire."

Mummy's boy

IN time-honoured tradition, Baroness Thatcher has flown to the side of her son Mark after his latest scrape. Detectives raided Thatcher Jr's Cape Town home earlier this month amid allegations that he illegally hired armed policemen as bodyguards. The prodigal son has spent a week holed up in the spanking new Labourdounain Hotel in Port Louis, capital of Mauritius, but is understood to be back in South Africa with his mother before she, too, nips to Mauritius to give a lecture on the virtues of a deregulated economy. "Mark is a regular visitor to our shores," says the High Commission, cheerfully. But unions are planning to demonstrate when La Thatcher arrives, which is unlikely to worry her.



Model role: Winona Ryder

Tall order

MODELS hoping to relaunch themselves as actresses should send their CVs to Woody Allen, who is about to start filming a satire about the fashion industry. While Kenneth Branagh and Winona Ryder have already been guaranteed parts, Allen's casting tour of Europe's catwalks in search of possible candidates yielded only one girl to his liking.

P·H·S

Paisley is Scotland's tragedy

Magnus Linklater
says scandal mars devolution debate

It should by rights have been a triumphant demonstration of cross-party unity: three political leaders brought together for the first time by a common policy on the future government of Scotland. In Edinburgh yesterday the Scottish Secretary, Donald Dewar, was flanked not only by the Liberal Democrat Menzies Campbell, but by the leader of the Scottish Nationalists, Alex Salmond — a man once reviled by Labour as the dangerous outlaw of Scottish politics.

But things did not go according to plan. Instead of keen debate on the prospects for near-misses referendum, the questions from the floor nagged away persistently at events in Paisley. The imminent suspension of a Labour MP accused of smearing his "now dead" colleague, Gordon McMaster, has brought this seedy and unpleasant affair out of Labour's backyard and dumped it on the front pavement at exactly the wrong moment.

It has, of course, nothing to do with the referendum itself, as Mr Dewar was at pains to point out. But at the very least it is a dangerous distraction. If the polls are anything to go by, the vote is by no means yet sewn up, and opponents of devolution have seized on the allegations to undermine the Government's campaign for a double "yes" vote — yes to a Scottish parliament yes to taxation powers.

The fine line being pushed yesterday by the Think Twice campaign, which is pressing for a double "no", could hardly have been cruder. "The Scottish people know that an Edinburgh parliament is not in the best of the boys and they don't like the look of the boys on offer," said the press release. More insidiously, the question being asked at the weekend was whether Labour's Scottish headquarters had deliberately suppressed the results of a previous inquiry into alleged corruption in Paisley. There have been stories of levers, possibly forged, bearing the signature of Labour's former Chief Whip and his deputy, which effectively killed off a damning report into the activities of the MP under suspicion, Tommy Graham.

None of this in fact amounts to a row of beans as far as the referendum is concerned. The whole point of the proportional representation system which will elect a future Scottish parliament is to put an end to the one-party domination that led to the Paisley mess in the first place. Labour's agreement to support the Liberal Democrats on PR was a handsome concession by a party which might otherwise have expected to control the government of Scotland in the same way that it has traditionally held power throughout the Central belt. The additional member system means that it will have to seek support from at least one other party to command a majority. At the same time, new Labour is determined to see an end to the old Labour style of politics in the West of Scotland, which Tommy Graham represents.

So Paisley is an aberration, a throwback to a dinosaur brand of politics soon to be extinct. But some of the mud is sticking, in part because the rumours are so hard to pin down. What, after all, is the charge? Corruption? Vote-rigging, malicious rumour? or just the commanding essence of a petty fiefdom riven by jealousy and suspicion? I know of at least four local inquiries into false prosperity lists in and around Paisley that came to nothing.

The Scottish Office has looked into allegations that public money was siphoned off by drug dealers. The Labour Party has tried to pin down charges of corruption. Now the present Chief Whip has conducted his own inquiry into the McMaster smear. All have found that the evidence is mostly word-of-mouth, the accusations unspecific, the witnesses often dumb. And the real enigma between the various factions makes it hard to decide when old scores are being paid off or when genuine information is being produced.

Clearly it is something that Labour has to resolve, and quickly, if the referendum is to have anything like a clear run. But given the inchoate nature of the affair and the long list of Mr Graham's friends ready and willing to defend their patron, a speedy resolution seems hard to achieve. That, in the end, is a disservice for "yes" and "no" voters alike who may be deprived of the chance to engage in the real arguments about this referendum. It would be tragic if this, the culmination of a century-long debate about the future of the Union and Scotland's place in it, was polluted by a seedy dispute about local party politics.

Help, however, may be at hand — and from an unexpected quarter. The best contribution yesterday came from Mr Salmond, whose party is pledged to eventual independence but who has thrown his weight behind the "yes" campaign. He is the most effective public debater in Scotland, and his party can deliver a formidable vote-getting machine when it wants to. It would be ironic if Labour's old foe became its most effective ally in the battle for a Scottish parliament.

Alan Caren is away.



THE PAISLEY CARNIVAL

Labour in Scotland needs independent investigation

In three weeks Scotland will have the chance to make the most radical change to the constitution of the United Kingdom for more than 20 years. The creation of a tax-raising Scottish parliament will fundamentally alter the balance of the British State. What Scotland, and its partners in the United Kingdom, need before such a departure is a debate. Instead, however, of being participants in a democratic festival Scotland's voters have become witnesses to a carnival of scandal.

Just as the sleaze allegations surrounding Neil Hamilton overshadowed the discussion of policy issues at the start of the general election, so the state of the Labour Party in the West of Scotland is attracting far more interest than the details of devolution. It is not ideal that a constitutional innovation so significant as Home Rule should be put to the people after a referendum campaign conducted in a few weeks. But when those weeks are dominated by speculation about the future of Renfrewshire MPs rather than delicate questions of tax and trust, it is unlikely that the devolution proposals will enjoy the scrutiny they need.

The Scottish Secretary, Donald Dewar, has already expressed his irritation that the terms of the devolution argument have been overshadowed by scandal. His irritation is justified, but the fault lies with members of his own party. It is all too understandable that the suicide of the Paisley South MP, Gordon McMaster, should have caused public attention to fall on the mazier in which power has been fought over and abused by Labour politicians in Scotland's wild west.

After the allegations of corruption among Glasgow councillors and the suspension of the Govan MP, Mohammed Sarwar, the Renfrew revelations, like the Tory sleaze scandals, have been seen as symptoms of a party too long in power. Voters have begun to ask if a Labour-dominated Scottish parliament would simply provide more tax-funded perks for the party's good ole boys.

The voters' concern will not be diminished by Labour's treatment of these matters in the

past. Labour politicians knew two years ago that, even by the robust standards of Scottish politics, strong-arm tactics were being deployed by Labour figures in Renfrewshire. The Whips' Office was informed. Questions were asked. And what action was taken? More recently both Mr McMaster and the member for Paisley North, Irene Adams, made repeated attempts to alert the authorities to what they believed was local corruption. Parliament was informed. Questions were asked. And what action was taken?

With Mr McMaster's death, and the leaking of his suicide note, action became inevitable. Labour's leadership dispatched the Party's Chief Whip, Nick Brown, to conduct an investigation. There is no reason to believe that Mr Brown will be anything other than as thorough, and tough, as possible. But will his actions be enough to restore public faith? Is it right that a matter in which the behaviour of Labour whips is an issue should be investigated by a Labour whip? And will voters be satisfied that an affair which arises from Labour's long grip on power and could involve the misuse of public money is being investigated by a Labour politician, however honourable?

Would the voters of Tatton have been better served if a Tory whip had taken Sir Gordon Downey's place? Why should the voters of Renfrew be denied an independent inquiry?

It is in everyone's interest that this matter is dealt with authoritatively. Suspending should not become scapegoating, and those accused in their absence, such as the Renfrew West MP, Tommy Graham, should have the opportunity to make their case openly. Conservatives may be tempted to gloat but they, and others sincerely sceptical about devolution, should realise that their principled objections will no more engage the voters' attention at the moment than a sermon would a football crowd. For Labour, an invitation to outside figures to investigate the Renfrew affair would show a commitment to good government which would allow the party to make the case for a Scottish parliament with greater confidence.

OUT OF ITS DEPTH

On Greenpeace, BP has right, the law and science on its side

Greenpeace UK's latest North Sea stunt, the unlawful occupation of British Petroleum's Stena Dee oilrig, has ended in court—but in less serious trouble than its actions merited. BP has offered to suspend its £1.4 million lawsuit to recover losses estimated at £250,000 for each day of the occupation, including £60,000 a day for use of the rig. BP recognises Greenpeace's right to campaign. It asks only that Greenpeace cease its unlawful sabotage of its operations.

Greenpeace, which complained that BP's suit could have put it out of business, has greeted this offer with a gracelessness that may betray its ambition to pose as martyr to "big oil". It continues to claim, unfoundedly, that BP is using its muscle "to stifle free and open discussion about environmental dangers that will affect us all". On the contrary, the company has behaved with immense restraint. It also, in this particular dispute, has the more solid environmental case.

What Greenpeace is agitating against is the development of the new oilfields of the "Atlantic Margin", west of Shetland, of which the BP Foulaen field is the first to be exploited commercially. Greenpeace argues not only that this will damage the immediate environment; but that since unsustainable global warming would result from using the world's existing hydrocarbon reserves, it is folly to open up new fields. Of course, it says, should instead be investing in renewable sources of energy such as solar and wind power. It wants Britain to set a unilateral example, by phasing out the use of fossil fuels within 40 years.

The Government rejects the narrower argument that local environmental factors have not been taken sufficiently into

account. On the wider argument, Greenpeace has half a point—as both Shell and BP, which plans to increase production of solar energy tenfold in the next decade, readily concede. But only half a point. Renewable energy technology may help to reduce fossil fuel consumption. For purposes such as electricity generation, BP believes that solar power could, in some climates, be economically viable within ten years. But renewable energy is decades away from substituting for oil and natural gas. Meanwhile, the priority should be to phase out coal, a far more potent greenhouse gas, and the most cost-effective way to do this is to replace it with oil and natural gas—as China, laudably, is making efforts to do.

If such realistic calculations offend Greenpeace's ideas of the politically correct, it would do most practical good by campaigning for double-glazing and other forms of energy-saving. In BP, which takes global warming seriously and includes in its corporate strategy conservation, transfers of energy-efficient technology to developing countries and research into climate change, it would find a willing partner. But such low-key work is not Greenpeace's trademark.

If Greenpeace is forced by the troubles it has brought on itself to retrench, that would create space for a more mature environmental debate in this country. In that debate, Greenpeace's antics are not only an irrelevance; they can even, as happened in the case of Brent Spar a year ago, cost companies and taxpayers millions, all to pay for a less desirable environmental outcome. Its talent for catchy slogans—in this case, the simplistic "no to new oil"—is no substitute for sound environmental science.

THE QUEEN AND DYER

A royal visit to Amritsar would be appropriate and helpful

The Queen's forthcoming state visit to India should, by rights, be a joyous one. Her love for India is abundant, as is the obvious respect in which she is held by Indians of all classes. A growing row, however, focused on her proposed visit to Amritsar, the holy city of the Sikhs, threatens to curdle the spirit.

Inder Kumar Gujral, India's Prime Minister, is reported to have advised the Queen to drop Amritsar from her itinerary. It is said that her presence in the city of the "Jallianwala Bagh massacre" would upset people, presumably because the Crown is still held responsible by many Indians for the actions in 1919 of Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer.

Historians, both in Britain and in India, are agreed that Dyer's actions represented the nadir of Britain's long imperial association with India. On April 13, 1919, Dyer ordered his soldiers to open fire on a dense crowd of unarmed demonstrators at Jallianwala Bagh, a little square in the heart of Amritsar. Sepoys blocked exits and emptied their guns into the gathering, killing 379 people. The goodwill towards Britain of many Indians died with them.

Yet Mr Gujral has erred in declaring Amritsar off limits for the Queen. Hers was to have been a respectful visit, providing her and her hosts with an opportunity for

reflection and prayer. Amritsar is revered by Sikhs as their own "Vatican", and a visit by the Queen would also have been an elegant way to take account of the sentiments of those Britons who are themselves of Sikh origin. Many of them have come out in favour of a royal visit to Amritsar, as have senior Sikh leaders in Punjab itself.

Yesterday Gurcharan Singh Tohra, a senior Sikh religious leader, pointed out that members of the British Royal Family, as well as British Cabinet ministers, have visited Amritsar in the past. Mr Tohra, who commands a considerable following, spoke darkly of "people with vested interests deliberately trying to put the Queen in an embarrassing position". Whatever are the "vested interests" to which he refers, he is certainly correct when he speaks of the pointless awkwardness which has now been thrust upon the visit.

None of this need have happened, and there is still time for matters to be resolved. Naturally, the Queen will not visit Amritsar if the Indian Prime Minister does not want her to. By the same token, however, Mr Gujral must understand that her visit is intended as a way to heal wounds and cement important ties. It is not intended as a slap from Dyer, delivered vicariously by the royal hand, 78 years after Jallianwala Bagh.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Changed nature of teen pregnancies

From Mrs Victoria Gillick

Sir, Teenage pregnancies are not a "serious problem" as far as numbers go (Letters, August 14). Throughout this century the pregnancy rate among 15 to 19-year-olds has never exceeded 8 per cent, and even today 95 per cent of teenagers do not get pregnant. Among schoolgirls the rate has never (except in 1990) even reached 1 per cent.

Within these comforting statistics, however, there exists a very real problem which has worsened progressively during the past 25 years: unmarried, state-dependent, teenage motherhood.

In 1971, when the teenage birthrate was 5 per cent, and the teenage marriage rate was 10 per cent, three quarters of all teenage mothers were young married women aged 17 to 19.

But by the mid-1970s the scene had begun to change: legislation allowing easier access to divorce, contraception and abortion; devaluing of Christian moral values, marriage, and the "family unit" in the popular media; a downturn in the economy and other social changes combined to make marriage and birthrates tumble, while divorce and abortion rates soared.

A generation later we are faced with the consequences of this liberal anarchy. And not surprisingly, it is those at the bottom of the social heap who have come off worst.

Today, the teenage marriage rate is only 1 per cent, and although the teenage birthrate has almost halved, 92 per cent of teenage pregnancies now occur outside marriage, a third ending in abortion.

Ten years of "safe sex" education, and a doubling of the use of contraceptives by adolescents in the last five years alone, has only succeeded in sexualising younger and younger children without achieving any significant change in the under-16 pregnancy and abortion rates.

We certainly do need a radical rethink on the issue. More of the same can only make things worse.

Yours faithfully,

VICTORIA GILLICK

(Director,

Inform,

2 Old Market,

Wisebech, Cambridgeshire.

August 14.

Academy must embrace all sports

From Dr Paul D. Jackson

Sir, The main benefits from a single national sports academy (report and leading article, August 13) are the common goal of excellence, and the sharing of knowledge and ideas from a wide range of sports.

The full potential for wider application of developments in fitness training, skill acquisition, sports psychology, the application of sports science, and sports medicine is lost if not all of our sports are included. The sports that remain within the proposed academy will lose from this as much as those excluded.

The Government must review the original objectives for a national sports academy drawn up by the last Government after extensive consultation with those involved in the training and management of elite athletes. An academy that does not involve all of our sports is less likely to meet the objective of sporting success across a broad range of activities.

Yours sincerely,

PAUL JACKSON

Hill Farmhouse,

Seend Hill, Seend, Wiltshire.

August 13.

From the Director of the National Playing Fields Association

Sir, The disagreement over which sports organisations should benefit from the lottery-financed sports academy masks a much more important argument over sports and sports funding in this country.

No one disagrees with the proposition that we should be trying to produce more world champions in a whole range of sports, and to that end money will presumably be targeted at the potential superstars who can bring gold medals home for Britain.

But sport exists at the other end of the scale too—where a few children throw their coats on the ground for a game of soccer or rounders. The places where they can do that in safety are vanishing all the time.

The National Playing Fields Association applied for lottery funding to provide basic sports equipment for children and young people in a number of recreation grounds. The application was turned down in 1995, and our appeal against that decision waited two years for a reply.

A hundred million pounds can ap-

parently be found for champions and high achievers, but a request for simple facilities to enable the nation's children to enjoy sport in a safe environment gets a very low priority.

Is this really the people's lottery?

Yours faithfully,

ELSA DAVIES

Director,

National Playing Fields Association, 25 Ovington Square, SW3.

August 13.

From Ms B. C. Morrish

Sir, Well might the British Government be impressed enough with our Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) to consider an equivalent here in the UK. However, your leading article simplifies its organisation and underestimates its success.

The AIS is not a simple institution where athletes of all disciplines train together. It is administered from a headquarters in Canberra, while most athletes train elsewhere, many near their own homes, under the guidance of state-run or specialist AIS departments.

The institute certainly has had some problems co-ordinating the sporting development of a relatively small population spread over a large area, but its success has been significant. Your emphasis on the one (admittedly mystifying) failure of Australian sport over the past couple of decades, namely singles tennis, is unfair. In other sports (including doubles tennis) Australia has captured more medals per head of population at Olympic and world championship level than almost any other country.

However, while the talents of many of our sportsmen and women have been developed through the AIS, it has been their identification and encouragement at grassroots level, through local clubs and schools, that has ensured a supply of quality cricketers, runners, swimmers, etc.

England needs to follow Australia's lead and create a national sporting academy which can co-ordinate the identification and development of raw talent from all sporting disciplines.

Yours sincerely,

BRONWYN MORRISH.

54 Evergreen Drive,

Hull, East Yorkshire.

b.c.morrish@biosci.hull.ac.uk

August 13.

From Dr J. A. Collings-Wells

Sir, Clearly Mr Ticehurst, if a regular reader of *The Times*, has forgotten an inspiring article that appeared in the paper on March 22, 1962.

Your anonymous correspondent recalled the night, 22 years earlier, when, as captain of a destroyer on convoy duty in the Atlantic, he rescued the crew of a merchant ship—one of 12 just torpedoed and sunk by German U-boats. He had been ordered to go back and search for survivors.

I heard in the middle of the ocean 500 miles from land on a darkish night the clear, penetrating sound of a whistle blowing. It was very eerie. I immediately stopped and went astern and as the way came off my ship I heard a man below me calling out: "Don't go away, that destroyer. Don't go away."

I looked over the side and there he was going down my starboard side on a piece of wood... "Stop starboard", but I was too late and I washed him off his plank. I could hear him calling: "I can't swim. Don't go away", but I reckoned his lifebelts would hold him.

I took the ship back alongside him and picked him up. He was the Chief Officer of the *Whitfield Point*. He had been three hours in the water and was, in his own words, waiting for a Sunderland flying boat in the morning...

Before landing at Londonderry, the officer and I thanked him for saving his life. "Don't thank me", I said. "Thank your Creator for guiding my ship to you, and your whistle," he said. "You had better find him and give him a good dinner," I replied.

Yours truly,
JOHN COLLINGS-WELLS.
Rivercroft,
Undershore Road,
Lymington, Hampshire.

August 15.

From Mr Geoffrey Atkinson

Sir, Mr Ticehurst makes a nice point in suggesting that airline safety jacks fitted with radio tracking devices rather than whistles would be of more use. Should he need to call for help in the mighty ocean, I can tell him that airlines worldwide, including my employer, would welcome the device if it enabled them to track the thousands of lifejackets which passengers steal annually from seat pouches on their aircraft.

I plan an anthology of the explanations given by such miscreants when prosecutions commence.

In the meantime airlines will continue prompt replacement of stolen safety jacks to ensure that should passengers find themselves floating around in the mighty ocean they will at least have a whistle to rely on.

Yours faithfully,
GEOFFREY ATKINSON

(Group lawyer),
Monarch Airlines Limited,
London Luton Airport,
Luton, Bedfordshire.

August 15.

Intelligence tests

From Mr Graham King

Sir, The French psychologist credited by Tony Buzan with the invention of intelligence tests ("Tests that freed an underclass", Mind Sports Olympiad supplement, August 11) was Alfred (not "Stanford") Binet (1857-1911). His researches were later used by Stanford University in California to set up intelligence tests — hence the name Stanford-Binet.

Binet observed the different stages of child development — such as dressing, washing, doing up buttons, tying shoelaces — and gave a mental age to each.

Stanford University later related this mental age (MA) to the child's chronological age (CA) and produced an intelligence quotient: if the two ages are the same then the child's IQ is 100. With CA 10 and MA 12 the child's IQ is 120.

Tests such as these can be used with

Forthcoming
marriages

OBITUARIES

MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN CHURCHER

Major-General John Churcher, CB, DSO and Bar, Director of Military Training at the War Office, 1957-59, died on August 2 aged 91. He was born on September 2, 1905.

Jack Churcher began to make his name as a strong-willed but invariably fair commander in the Normandy beachhead in June 1944. He landed eight days after D-Day in command of the 1st Herefordshire Regiment (TA) in 159th Infantry Brigade of General "Pip" Roberts's 11th Armoured Division. During Montgomery's "Epsom" offensive at the end of June, he found his battalion isolated in the bridgehead on the far side of the Odon. Towards dusk on June 30, it came under heavy attack by units of 2nd SS Panzer Corps, which were intent on destroying the bridgehead.

Being unable to contact the Gunners with his call for defensive fire, Churcher made his way back to brigade HQ, and with the Royal Artillery commander set in train a defensive fire plan, during which 39,000 rounds were fired in 4½ hours, saving his and other units. General Speidel, Rommel's chief of staff, reported early next morning that "the resumption of the attack by 2nd SS Panzer Corps had been stopped by very strong artillery concentrations". Churcher was awarded his first DSO for the action, and soon after was promoted to command 159th Infantry Brigade, which he had been instrumental in saving.

After "Epsom", Pip Roberts reorganised 11th Armoured Division into two mixed or "square" brigades (each of two armoured regiments and two infantry battalions). Churcher fought his brigade in this formation for the rest of the campaign in "Goodwood", the attempted armoured breakthrough east of Caen; during armoured battles to help the American breakout at St Lô; in the advance across the Seine to the liberation of Antwerp; in the crossing of the Rhine; and in the final advance to the Baltic, where he arrested the Doenitz Government at Flensburg.

In his privately published autobiography, he records a number of memorable and sometimes bizarre events: the capture of Vimy Ridge without a shot being fired; the incarceration of German prisoners in cages at Antwerp Zoo; clearing the concentration camp at Belsen; rounding up Himmler, Speer (who was arrested in his bath), Rosenberg, Jodi, and William Joyce (Lord Haw Haw). He was personally presented with the gold-decorated baton of Grand Admiral Doenitz, which is now on display in the Shropshire Regimental Museum.

His second DSO was awarded in 1946 for his outstanding leadership of 159th Brigade during the campaign and its aftermath. Those who served



with Jack Churcher soon came to admire his professionalism and disregard for his own safety, though he never committed his troops to battle without ensuring that they had the best possible chance of survival. Officers who jeopardised success were swiftly found alternative employment, while those who measured up to his standards benefited from his unstinting confidence and loyal support.

In his memoirs, General Pip Roberts described Churcher as "meticulous in his planning of the set-piece battle". His officers and men, however, admired him more in mobile actions, where his invariable presence near the front was a constant source of inspiration and encouragement.

The son of Lieutenant-Colonel B. T. Churcher of the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, John Bryan Churcher was educated at Wellington and Sandhurst before being com-

missioned into the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry in 1925, and posted to the 2nd Battalion in the Channel Islands, where he gained his expertise in marksmanship. By 1931, he was an instructor at the machinegun school at Netheravon, where he became the driving force behind the trials of the 3in mortar and the Bren gun-carrier. He recalled the infectious exuberance of David Niven, the actor, who at Netheravon took a disconcertingly humorous approach to the serious business of training for war.

In 1936 he joined the 1st Battalion in India, and in 1937 he was transferred to the 1st Battalion of the Kings Shropshire Light Infantry, returning home in 1939 to attend the staff college.

Shortly after the outbreak of war, he was promoted Brigade Major of 11th Infantry Brigade, commanded by the stern Kenneth Anderson. It was part of

4th Division, which was, at that time, holding a sector of the Maginot Line. It was from Anderson that Churcher learned the importance of dominating no man's land by active patrolling, a lesson that he was to practise successfully during the campaign in North-West Europe.

He was on leave in England in May 1940 when the German offensive opened in the West. Thanks to misdirection by the War Office, he was too late to reach his brigade before it was cut off by the German advance to the Channel, and so he was appointed GSO2 to the improvised Beaumaris Division, formed out of Lines of Communication troops, with this he returned to England via Cherbourg.

Such was the shambles in France that he had been posted as missing. The War Office, however, reincarnated him temporarily as Brigade Major of 133rd Infantry Brigade before appointing him as GSO2 in HQ 1st Canadian Corps at Leatherhead, where he earned a reputation for uncompromising efficiency. After a brief spell as a staff college instructor and as GSO1 35th Welsh Division, he was given command of 1st Herefords in November 1942. In the aftermath of the war he was given the depressing task of disbanding a succession of divisions as a temporary major-general: 43rd Division at Celle in Germany; Northumbrian District; 2nd Division in Malaya; and 3rd Division in Egypt. He received his reward in July 1947, when he was given the substantive command of the 5th Division at Brunswick with 17,000 troops under his direct command. It was a challenging task, given the enormous administrative and logistic problems in the devastated Germany. One of his tasks was Operation Woodpecker, the felling of German forests and shipping of timber to Britain as part of the reparations.

He attended the Imperial Defence College in 1948, and went on to hold a series of key appointments: Brigadier General Staff, Western Command, 1949-53; Chief of Staff, Southern Command, 1951-54; GOC 3rd Division, 1954-57 (including the Suez Operation); and finally Director of Military Training in the War Office, 1957-59. He was appointed CB in 1952.

After leaving the Army in 1959, he became director and general secretary of the Independent Stores Association. In 1971, he joined Brown and Root (UK) as a consultant in personnel and training, and became involved in the development of North Sea oil and gas. He also joined a horse racing syndicate which had modest success at Ascot, Newmarket and Sandown.

He married Rosamond Parkin in 1937. They had a son and two daughters. He was widowed in 1993, and two years later he married Pauline Thompson, who had nursed him in his declining years. She and his children survive him.

ERIC HALLADAY

Eric Halladay, college principal and historian of rowing, died from cancer on July 19 aged 67. He was born on July 9, 1930.

ERIC HALLADAY's career epitomised in a unique way many of the attributes of Co Durham, with which he had a long association. The sinews of his life were learning, the Army, an Anglican faith and rowing. Durham city is the proud but unobtrusive host to the oldest regatta in the country, and from 1981 to 1988 Halladay was its president and chairman. His authoritative *Rowing in England - A Social History* (1990) explored the contrasts of Tyne and Thames, amateur and professional with the breadth of perspective of an historian who had chaired the Northern Rowing Council (1972-75) and been a member both of the Tyne Rowing Club and Leander. He was awarded an Amateur Rowing Association Medal of Honour in 1988 and an ARA Gold Coaching Award.

Although a distinguished coach, he was not himself an oarsman: his selection as a steward of Henley Royal Regatta in 1993 gave him more pleasure than any other. As chairman of the board of its Rowing Hall of Fame, he was approaching an historian's approach to his involvement with the new River and Rowing Museum at Henley.

Eric Halladay was educated at Durham School, where he began his long association with rowing on the River Wear, and at St John's College, Cambridge, where he found inspiration in the study of Britain's imperial involvement in the Lady Margaret Boat Club.

He undertook his National Service as a second lieutenant in the 5th Royal Horse Artillery. The son of a vicar, he read theology at Ripon Hall, Oxford, for a year after Cambridge. After teaching at Exeter School, he was appointed senior lecturer at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 1960.

In 1964 he became senior tutor (and in 1967 the first vice-master) of Grey College in the University of Durham, where his geniality, good sense, and fairness encouraged an atmosphere of friendly informality on traditional lines. He lectured on the history of Africa, publishing *The Building Of*



spent afternoons and weekends on the towpath of the Wear or on a launch on the Tyne, welding an extraordinary atmosphere of good fellowship and enduring friendship among generations of oarsmen.

Although he had looked forward to an early retirement, Halladay found himself unable to carry out his planned retreat from university life. In 1990 he was invited to act as Rector of St Aidan's College in an unexpected interregnum, and the following year he was appointed Principal at St Chad's College, a small independent Anglican foundation associated with the university and situated in the shadow of the cathedral. His years at St Chad's were among his happiest, with a congenial common room and collegiate grounds which ran down to the River Wear opposite the boathouse. For a time, the college found itself able to look forward in harmony.

In 1994 Halladay was at last free to enjoy family life and grandchildren, books, and friendships over tobacco and ale, in his house overlooking the Tyne in Corbridge, still co-ordinating the university crews. He died after a virulent but short illness.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret, two daughters and a son.

PROFESSOR WILLIAM PARRY-JONES

Professor William Parry-Jones, psychiatrist, died on July 20 aged 62. He was born on June 22, 1935.

AS ONE of the leading figures in child and adolescent psychiatry, William Parry-Jones helped children suffering from trauma not only in Britain but

in war-torn Yugoslavia. He helped to develop the academic study of child psychiatry, and was an authority on the history of psychiatric treatment. He was also an adviser to the World Health Organisation and America's National Academy of Science.

The son of a doctor, he trained in medicine at Cam-

bridge and at the London Hospital Medical College. After working in general medicine he decided to specialise in psychiatry, moving first to his native North Wales and then to Oxford. For his medical doctorate he made the unusual choice of a subject in the history of psychiatry and worked on the ar-

chives of the Oxfordshire private "mad-houses" in the 18th and early 19th centuries. His study corrected previously unfavourable opinions about these institutions, and showed how historical knowledge can contribute to thought about contemporary medical problems. The resulting book was acclaimed, and

the quality of its scholarship was recognised by the award of the Ralph Nobel Prize by Cambridge University, and by Parry-Jones's election to a fellowship of Linacre College, Oxford — a most unusual distinction for a young psychiatrist who had yet to complete his specialist training.

In 1969 Parry-Jones joined Oxford's new department of psychiatry, where he helped to establish the teaching programme. At the same time he decided to develop his interest in the psychiatric problems of young people, and in 1972 he was appointed director of the department of adolescent psychiatry in Oxford. Before long the unit was recognised for its excellence, and Parry-Jones's advice was sought on national committees. His historical research was now combined with clinical studies of behavioural problems and eating disorders among adolescents.

In 1987 he was appointed to the Chair of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Glasgow University, the only post of its kind in Scotland. He soon became influential throughout the medical school and as specialist adviser to the Scottish Office and as chairman of the child and adolescent psychiatry section of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland. His research interests widened as he undertook inquiries into the psychological difficulties of children



with chronic and painful illness.

In 1988, the Lockerbie air-crash disaster led to a new phase in his career. He was quick to offer his services to the children and families involved, and continued to assist them long afterwards. He studied the immediate and long-term psychological ef-

fects of the trauma, and developed improved ways to help the young victims. Internationally recognised as an expert on the consequences of trauma, he offered help to the refugee camps in Hungary, which contained many children from the war zones of the former Yugoslavia. He worked untiringly to provide

support for children who had seen their parents killed. He and others obtained funding for further direct work with the children in Yugoslavia, as well as providing training for local staff. In 1996-97 his expertise was again called upon after the Dunblane shootings.

William Parry-Jones's achievements were based upon exceptional personal qualities and on a particularly happy family life. He had a quiet dignity and a natural authority that were combined with great humanity, warmth and humour. He was admired for his fairness and integrity. His ability to master detail and identify the important aspects of a complex problem contributed to his success as an historian of psychiatry as well as to his clinical skills.

His marriage to Brenda was exceptionally close. They had known each other since childhood. She created an ideal family life and as an archivist she shared in his scholarly work. They published many papers together, and when their children had left home, they acquired a flat in Cambridge which they visited at weekends to work together on the special collections in psychiatric history in the university library.

William Parry-Jones is survived by his wife, two daughters and a son.

PERSONAL COLUMN

TICKETS FOR SALE

Specialists in Sold Out Events

at lower pop and sport

OASIS, PHIL

COLLINS, U2

Tel: 0171 821 6616

Fax: 0171 828 2507

ALL TICKETS!

World Cup '98

Oval Test & Nat West

Rugby at Twickenham

Prudential Super Sixes

Costa & All West End Shows

Sold Out Events No Problem

0171 247 4123

FOR SALE

A BIRTHDAY Surprise Offer

Special Offer

Prize Draw

The art of spinning



Peter Mandelson, left, and John Prescott: Labour is starting to find that the co-ordination of messages (to say nothing of big egos) is just that little bit harder in government



New Labour's spin-doctoring skills will face their true test when the political honeymoon ends and Tony Blair comes under fire, says Charles Lewington

So, John "The Shark" Prescott and Peter "The Crab" Mandelson cannot agree what to say about those terrible German "Millennium" Dome builders. The Deputy Prime Minister says the British construction industry should hang its head in shame. The Minister without Portfolio says the Brits have done bloody well out of the (his) Millennium Project, and Mr Prescott, who is DPM in name only, can go whistling. Enter the Chinese mimen crab, sailing in on cue to complete a classic Whitehall farce.

I hesitate to say this, but it looks as if new Labour is starting to find that the co-ordination of messages (to say nothing of big egos) is just that little bit harder in government than in opposition. It is one thing to sit in some House of Commons garret deciding what insult to hurl at which Cabinet minister for the next television bulletin. It is quite another — when the proverbial you-know-what hits the fan — to square Downing Street, or the relevant ministers, the private offices, and the press offices, in time for a "World At One" bid in 20 minutes' time, with the radio car on its way.

Particularly when the ministers concerned dislike each other. The most piquant that such a cock-up should involve the Master of Spin himself, Mr Mandelson, who says that "information control" was at the heart of his election strategy, and is supposed to be at the heart of his strategy for government.

It may be a minor incident — compared with the Tory Cabinet's disagreements over Europe, this is minor league — but it should start to dispel the myth of the inabiliblity of new Labour's spin-doctor.

According to the energetic

Labour has yet to come under political attack

Isn't this the voice of an exulted former Tory spin-doctor, envious of new Labour's news management skills, and looking for the first opportunity to stick the knife in?

Don't get me wrong: I am envious of the politicisation of the Downing Street press machine, the appointment of departmental political press spokesmen (and women) and the updating of the completely useless "Cab-e-net" computer system.

Michael Heseltine's EDCP Committee, which met daily to try to manage the news, was too large and unwieldy. I counted 25 people at one meeting in Heseltine's room, sunk



Charles Lewington: envious of news management skills

deep into his comfortable sofa. We couldn't discuss political issues with civil servants present, and it was difficult to discuss government manners without civil servants. So we ended up with the worst of both worlds.

The Cab-e-net system was derided by civil servants and ministers alike. Steven Norris used to list every trivial ministerial engagement on it — short of dinner dates with a girlfriend — to give the impression that he was the busiest minister in government.

The failure of Conservative Central Office to exercise much, if any, control over the Government's information machinery was a source of huge frustration. But the reality is that because of the Conservative Government's

failure to manage the news, new Labour has yet to come under political attack.

On each occasion, the deployment of numerous spin-doctors was deeply counter-

productive. The briefings were confused and often contradictory. Statements were made up on the hoof, and political journalists would often remark to me that the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing.

Interestingly, in each of the three cases, new Labour had been caught indulging in hypocrisy on a grand scale: Harman using a grammar-school system which Labour was (then) committed to opposing; Blair pretending to be tough on unions in one breath, while conceding to their bottom-line demands in another; and new Labour asserting its conversion to Thatcherism by promising to sell off National Air Traffic Services, while assuring union leaders of the opposite in private.

The moral is that if you are caught speaking with forked tongue, you can't rely on your tongue to talk your way out of the problem. Since the election, new Labour has yet to come under political attack, partly because the press has respected the honeymoon, and

partly because of the grieving process in the Conservative Party. There have been skirmishes over the share portfolio of Lord Simon of Highbury, a new Labour business appointee, but nothing more substantial to test the defensive skills of the spin-masters.

The few minor alarms have been dealt with deftly. The break-up of Robin Cook's marriage was near news management, although not every jilted wife will accept that one hour is a reasonable amount of time to decide whether to end a marriage. The saga of the Millennium Dome does not show that new Labour is "coming apart at the seams", as David

Willets rather ambitiously described the incident on Monday, but that news management in opposition is rather simpler than news management in government.

And only when things really start hotting up for the Prime Minister can we test whether new Labour's spin-doctoring skills are real or simply a well-spun myth.

• The author is a freelance journalist, and former Director of Communications for the Conservative Party

Style is of the essence

Eighteen of us were seated at an alfresco lunch in the depths of rural Gascony two weeks ago, and I hadn't thought of Wapping for at least three days. Then my neighbour turned and subjected me to a public trial: *The Times* had described somebody as an "author and writer". What had I to say about that?

The foie gras melted as I mounted an unconvincing defence and, with hindsight, I wish that I had had to hand the 291-page booklet published at *The Times* last week and given to every member of the staff. The second edition of the 1995 version of *The Times Style-Guide* provides writers and sub-editors with a quick reference to contentious points of grammar and spelling and determines how *The Times* is written. It would have demonstrated to my Wykehamist inquisitor, a prominent London barrister, how hard *The Times* and other newspapers try to maintain standards of correct English usage as they edit at high speed hundreds of thousands of words a day.

The responsibility for maintaining standards at *The Times* throughout the 40 to 60 pages of the daily paper belongs to Tim Austin, the chief revise editor. He starts work at 2.30pm, reads a proof of every page, checks reports and features for accuracy and tone, corrects errors of style and grammar, and works until past midnight.

Until the Nineties, the main job of a revise editor was checking that reports conformed to the newspaper's style. One of the main jobs

PAPER ROUND

Brian MacArthur

know the basic rules of grammar or are ignorant of styles of title in the Armed Forces, the Churches or the Courts, especially if they are soldiers, clergymen or lawyers — so upset that they may cancel their subscriptions.

The style book makes fascinating reading. Take the world's most famous woman. She is Diana, Princess of Wales, at first mentioned subsequently the Princess (with a capital, as she still remains a member of the Royal Family) and never Princess Diana or — even worse — Princess Di (except in reported speech). The Duchess of York, however, has capitals at first mention but is demoted subsequently to the duchess (lower case) because she is no longer a member of the Royal Family (always upper case).

Until only recently *The Times* tried to avoid the use of capital letters. It was prime minister, not Prime Minister. Capitals are now back in fashion: "The proper names of people and places, formal titles or titles of important offices, and the names of well-known and substantial institutions, all require capitals."

Maintaining style is obviously important, but it should not be a straitjacket and should not destroy the style of the best writers and columnists. Sub-editors do not tamper with the prose of Bernard Levin, Simon Jenkins or Matthew Parris or, of course, the Editor (always caps).

I blush to think I referred to Christ Church College.

THE TIMES

Among the clichés that are to be "resisted strongly" are backlash, brainchild, consensus, dramatic, legendary, mega, prestigious, shambles and traumatic. Joining hyphens are rarely needed when adverbs are used to qualify adjectives. So it is heavily pregnant or colourfully decorated — unless the compound looks better with the hyphen, in which case it can be well-founded or ill-educated.

There is guidance on participles, particularly when they are unrelated. "Judging by the lingering camera shots, Jack's luck was not about to change" is wrong — judging requires a following noun or pronoun in agreement: "Judging by the lingering camera shots, I saw that Jack's luck..."

At this newspaper, the week ends on Saturday night: crash, shock and slam are to be avoided in headlines but bid (for attempt), crisis, hit (adversely affected) and row (clash or dispute) are OK (not okay). If they are not over-worked, farther is applied only to distance; emphasis is preferred to stress; and almost every surname (except for convicted offenders, the dead and cases where common usage omits a title, mostly in arts and sport) should be granted the courtesy of a title, with Ms fully acceptable.

Maintaining style is obviously important, but it should not be a straitjacket and should not destroy the style of the best writers and columnists. Sub-editors do not tamper with the prose of Bernard Levin, Simon Jenkins or Matthew Parris or, of course, the Editor (always caps).

PASSPORT TO EUROPE



- Save at least 25% at 178 top hotels
- £35 gourmet lunch voucher offer
- Win a lunch for two in Paris

Save at least 25% on a luxurious short break for two at many of the best hotels in Europe with our Passport to Europe offer, in association with Relais and Châteaux and MasterCard. The offer, valid for unlimited stays between September 22, 1997 and April 9, 1998, gives you a choice of 178 hotels in 16 countries. Passport to Europe offers an inclusive package for two people for one night at a price which includes your stay, dinner and breakfast plus service charges and VAT.

• Full details of Passport to Europe appeared in Saturday's Weekend section. For a copy call 0171-481 3355 during office hours. For details of Leisure Direction's exclusive travel offers call 0181-324 4011.

WIN LE LUNCH IN PARIS

For your chance to win a £35 gourmet lunch (there are eight restaurants in Paris, all with two Michelin stars, to choose from) call our competition hotline on 0891 300 370 (ex UK +44 990 100 373), before midnight tonight, with your answer to this question:

In how many countries are there restaurants offering Le Lunch?

The winner will be selected at random from all correct entries received. Normal TNL competition rules apply.

0891 Calls cost 50p per minute.



Your Passport to Europe pack contains a card and the Relais and Châteaux 1997 International Guide with details of the 178 participating hotels. You will also receive details of how to apply for your Le Lunch voucher — entitling you to enjoy a gourmet lunch at one of 175 Relais and Châteaux restaurants in 13 European countries for just £35.

In addition, we are offering special travel discounts to Europe, with savings of up to 50% off brochure prices, with Leisure Direction.

HOW TO APPLY FOR YOUR PASSPORT TO EUROPE PACK

To get your *Times/Relais & Châteaux* Passport to Europe Pack simply collect four tokens from *The Times*. Seven will be printed up to and including Saturday August 23, 1997. Then complete this coupon and send it to:

Title _____	Initials _____
Surname _____	Address _____
Postcode _____	Daytime tel _____

The Times/Relais & Châteaux offer, Leisure Direction, Image House, Station Road, London N17 9LR, to arrive no later than September 30, 1997. Please allow 28 days for delivery.

IT WOULD HELP US IF YOU ANSWERED THESE QUESTIONS:

Which of the following age groups do you fall into? (Please tick box)

15-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+

Which national daily newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (45 copies) each week?

Which national Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (24 copies a month)?

If you would prefer not to receive information and offers from organisations carefully selected by *The Times*, please tick

THE TIMES



2

INSIDE
SECTION

2
TODAY



BUSINESS

B&Q hammers
home the
DIY message
PAGE 27

ARTS

The best lil' orchestra in Texas
heads for the Proms
PAGES 30-32

SPORT

Lloyd stands in
judgment on
England's ills
PAGES 37-44

TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
PAGES
42, 43

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 20 1997

US and German rates pause soothes foreign exchanges

By GRAHAM SHARPE
FINANCIAL EDITOR

LINGERING fears of another quick bout of currency instability on the foreign exchanges were soothed yesterday when Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the US Federal Reserve Board; and Hans Tietmeyer, President of the Bundesbank, convinced colleagues they again that interest rates should not be changed.

Shares bounced back on London and continued to recover in New York. Weekend worries about asset prices were again banished to the

sidelines. In London, the FTSE 100 index of blue chips gained 79.2 points or 1.7 per cent to 4,914.2, retrieving almost half the losses of Friday and Monday. On the Continent, the Eurotrak 100 index gained 1.9 per cent.

Second-line UK stocks, which missed most of this year's boom but also the weekend upsets, again moved out on the euphoria, edging up 0.5 per cent. The FTSE 250 index gained 17.2 points to 4,680.3.

In New York, a volatile Dow Jones industrial average was up 63 points at midday to 7,906, retrieving

two thirds of Friday's losses in this week's two trading days.

In Hong Kong, which was closed on Monday, prices fell sharply, partly in response to a rise in interbank interest rates to resist an attack on the Hong Kong dollar. The Hang Seng index lost 3.5 per cent, or 619.62 points, to close at 15,477.26. The Manila stock exchange was closed by monsoon floods.

Speculation had mounted last week that the Bundesbank might allow its repo rate, at which it gives credit to banks, to rise above the 3 per cent maintained for the past

year. This became less likely as a series of interviews by members of the Bundesbank Council expressing their worries over the falling mark managed to talk it up. On Monday, another council member sought to prepare markets for a further standstill by saying that any rise in interest rates would damage Germany's domestic economy, a view echoed yesterday by OECD, the Paris-based agency, which said the mark's fall should last.

The dollar climbed back further against the mark on the foreign exchanges, again attaining DM1.84.

Sterling made a more modest gain of 1.4 pence to DM2.9487, but edged down against the dollar. The sterling index rose from 102.3 to 102.6 on the day.

Few would have contemplated a change in the Fed's stance this month were it not for the fears stirred on Friday. Although much-touted official statistics of productivity growth remain low, the economy continues to expand with no sign of rising inflation or wage growth. The Fed has not changed rates since March and will not meet again until September 30.

ADRIAN BROOKS

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	4,914.2	(+7.2)
FTSE All share	2,317.83	(+30.45)
Nikkei	18,651.00	(+80.10)
Dow Jones	7,906.54	(+63.18)*
S&P Composite	921.55	(+9.05)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	98 1/2	(98 1/2%)

LONDON MONEY

Bank Intertbank	7 1/4%	(7 1/4%)
Long term gvt future (Sep)	115 1/2	(115 1/2%)

STERLING

New York	1.6035*	(1.6041)
London	1.6082	(1.6109)
S	2.2082	(2.2135)
FT	2.3265	(2.3393)
SF	2.4320	(2.4330)
Yen	108.84	(109.66)
2 Index	102.8	(102.3)

US DOLLAR

London	1.9110*	(1.9147)
DM	6.1960*	(6.1935)
SP	1.5160*	(1.5179)
Yen	118.30*	(118.07)
5 Index	106.1	(105.6)

Tokyo close Yen 117.94

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Nov)	\$19.30	(\$19.00)
--------------------	---------	-----------

GOLD

London close	\$322.85	(\$322.95)
--------------	----------	------------

* denotes midday trading price

and into sets of today's led to worth intend wards which of the and 1 they siasian manu- some party, istitu- prime obvi- The LIM's ing.

its at doubt in the society, or that a cent euro nt for in the al re- run to al re-push

t 11/1 S. the tance take- wood, fell said look- quisi- tates), sorted use in illion, or the

the We're sitions industry smalls. We cash good final 5p on the 6p

US cosmetics queen eyes Laura Ashley

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM, RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

AS ANN IVERSON, Laura Ashley chief executive, insisted last night that she has no intention of resigning, another feisty American admitted she was considering a bid for the company.

Georgie Mosbacher, a successful cosmetics entrepreneur who tried to buy Laura Ashley two years ago, said: "I am still very much like the company." Asked whether she might make an offer, she said: "It is possible."

Yesterday the company revealed worse than expected losses and plans to close two of its factories in Wales. The £1 million-a-year Mrs Iverson acknowledged that the company will make no profit this year, and she is being forced to abandon expansion plans in the United States. "I have not considered leaving and have the full support of the board and major shareholders," she said. "Pressure is to be expected. We need to get it right."

With the company's fortunes at such a low ebb, there is some speculation that a bidder could come forward and Georgie Mosbacher is a favourite contender. The wife of Bob Mosbacher, former US Commerce Secretary, she bought and successfully

turned round the La Prairie cosmetics company. Her interest in Laura Ashley stems from a belief that she could effect a similar turnaround there and two years ago she tried to persuade Sir Bernard Ashley to sell his shares to her.

Although she refused then, she has kept a careful watch on the company ever since. The latest news is likely to persuade her to renew her takeover efforts, although last night she said she had yet to make another approach.

Laura Ashley, one of the largest employers in rural Wales, will make up to 190 workers redundant and the closure of two of its garment factories in Caerphilly and Machynlleth. The work will be transferred to lower-cost factories abroad.

News of the closures caused a storm of local protest. Lembit Opik, Liberal Democrat MP for Machynlleth, said he would be seeking a meeting with Mrs Iverson.

Group-like-for sales in the first half were up 5 per cent. In the UK, the company up 4 per cent, and on mainland Europe fell 9 per cent. The gross margin fell from 48.4 to 40.5 per cent.

Commentary, page 25



Greg Hutchings, chairman of Tomkins, still retains share options in the company valued at £1.7 million

Hutchings pay package tops £2m

By JASON NISS

GREG HUTCHINGS, chairman of Tomkins, the bread, gum and bicycles group, picked up £2.05 million in pay, bonus and exercised share options last year.

Mr Hutchings received a 21 per cent increase in his salary package to £1.36 million, the first increase since 1993. In addition he cashed in share

options creating a profit of £730,000 and retains share options, valued in the group's accounts at £1.7 million.

Ian Duncan, finance director, was awarded a 48 per cent increase in pay and bonus to £912,000. Bob Muddimer, deputy chairman, nearly doubled his pay package to £605,000. The packages are determined by the remuneration committee — which includes

Charles Gates, who is paid a £250,000 (£155,000) a year consultancy by Tomkins.

Another company unloved by the City, Matthew Clark, revealed 50 per cent pay rises for its three senior directors. The troubled cider maker increased the basic pay of Peter Aikens, chief executive, from £151,000 to £230,000, while two other directors, Hugh Etheridge and Peter

Huntley, saw their salaries rise from £97,000 to £130,000. None of them received bonus payments, which meant their total packages fell. The salary increases were agreed in May last year, four months before the company revealed that it was facing problems caused by the competition from acolops.

City Diary, page 27

Granada buyout at knock-down price

By DOMINIC WALSH

GRANADA, the media and leisure combine, is poised to sell its computer services division to a management buyout team backed by venture capital.

A confidential memorandum, circulated to senior executives, suggests the deal will be completed in September. Analysts believe that the business, built up in the 1980s through a string of acquisitions totalling more than £200 million, could fetch up to £80 million.

Granada's interim results in June were hit by a £167 million goodwill write-down against the value of the business, which made a profit in the half year of £4.7 million. It provides emergency services and maintenance contracts with companies such as British Aerospace. The disposal is the latest in a series of non-

core asset disposals in the wake of Granada's acquisition of the Forte hotel and catering empire. So far it has recouped more than £1.3 billion of the £3.9 billion purchase price.

It is understood that negotiations are continuing over a £350 million-plus deal to sell Grovernor House Hotel, Forte's flagship in London's Park Lane. The hotel formed part of the Exclusive Hotels package put up for sale last year, but was taken off the market six months ago.

The prospective purchaser is a consortium of Middle Eastern investors linked to the kingdom of Qatar's ruling Al Thani family.

A deal whereby Ritz-Carlton, the US hotel group, would have managed the property appears to have fallen through.

The Federal Communications Commission, the telecommunications regulator, was expected last night to hand a victory to the long-distance phone companies by rejecting an application from Ameritech, the regional phone company bid to offer a regional phone company to offer long-distance service because it has not opened up its own markets sufficiently to new competitors, including MCI and AT&T. The 1996 Telecommunications Act gave local and regional operators the right to offer long-distance service as long as the long-distance operators are unfairly resisting its efforts to compete in the local markets, an area in which it wants to expand.

MCI's mounting losses in the local market triggered a surprise profits warning last month that sent BT's share price plummeting.

The Federal Communications Commission, the top

build local infrastructure. In June, the FCC rejected a bid by SBC Communications regional phone company to offer long-distance service because it failed to meet requirements.

BT wants to reduce the price it is paying for MCI because its losses in the local market will be higher than expected. However, MCI is indicating there is no room to renegotiate. BT fears that institutions will demand the resignations of Sir Ian Vallance, chairman, and Sir Peter Bonfield, chief executive, if the price is unchanged.

If the merger is completed, BT probably will attempt to reduce MCI's losses by cutting local market investment. BT's strategy will be unveiled this month when it completes a review of the merger.

"We've fixed our mortgage payments until 2001. Have you?"

Fact: Interest rates have risen twice in the last two months and could go higher... To find out the BEST FIXED RATE available from Mortgage Intelligence, the UK's largest group of mortgage brokers, call FREE anytime on:

0500-10-10-33
• MORTGAGE •
INTELLIGENCE

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS OR CHARGE LEVIES SECURED ON IT.

TM 2000/1972

Break for the Border breaks from music

Firms fear tax-linked leap in electricity prices

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BUSINESSES are facing big rises in electricity prices in what they fear is a move by the electricity industry to recoup the windfall tax and bolster margins ahead of a new regulatory price control.

Large customers report unprecedented price increases of up to 20 per cent on the generation part of their electricity bills in new contracts under negotiation.

Generation charges are unregulated and make up about half of a bill, while other

components — such as transmission and distribution — are regulated. Business and industrial customers spend about £1 million a factory or about £50,000 a retail outlet each year on electricity.

The price rises have important implications for the wholesale price of electricity and contradict forecasts from the electricity regulator that generation costs will fall by between 4 and 12 per cent in the wholesale market.

Bob Spears, of the Utility Buyers Forum, said: "These increases are unjustifiable. We are seeing rises far above RPI for which there should be no cause." Companies in the forum

believe that the electricity companies are cranking up prices to rake back some of the windfall tax.

Utility companies gave warning ahead of the £5.2 billion windfall tax that it would lead to increased prices. However, Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, said that the companies would be able to absorb the tax. Domestic customers are — until the next price review — protected from price jumps by regulation, but business is not.

Don McGarrigle, an energy adviser who works for several large companies, said: "The rises are staggering. With increases between 10 and 20 per cent, there is a strong belief that they

are trying to pass on the windfall tax and guarding against the supply price review."

A spokeswoman for the Electricity Association, the trade body, said that it had no details on the current round of contract talks, which were private between suppliers and customers.

Stephen Littlechild, the industry watchdog, will today set out the last discussion paper in the supply price review, which — he intends — will cut domestic electricity prices by £30 a year. Plans unveiled so far have incensed regional electricity companies, some of which are threatening to go to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Collapse of Hamlet puts 150 jobs at risk

ABOUT 150 jobs were under threat after Hamlet Group, the clothes importer, went into administration with debts of £40 million. Chris Hughes and Chris Barlow, joint administrators, of Coopers & Lybrand, said the company had collapsed because of "management problems" and because it had overextended itself financially. Dealing in shares in Hamlet Group, based in Whitechapel, East London, were suspended last week at 22½ p, valuing the company at £6.7 million.

The administration order covers three companies: Hamlet Group, Hamlet International and Jeffrey Rogers (Imports). Hamlet Group trade names include Nougar, Dare to Bare and Barnaby. "We are actively completing a review of the business which is trading as normal," said Mr Hughes. "We have already had several expressions of interest for various parts of the group, and we will be looking to progress these interests to the best effect for creditors and shareholders."

Kvaerner disappoints

SHARES in Kvaerner, the Anglo-Norwegian engineering and shipping group that took over Trafalgar House last year, fell 25 Norwegian crowns to 433 crowns yesterday after the group reported a rise in first-half operating profits from 520 million crowns to 690 million crowns (£56.1 million). Analysts who had expected 1.2 billion crowns of operating profit said the figures were extremely bad, adding that the pre-tax profit margin was less than 1 per cent. Kvaerner raised the target for disposals from 10 billion to 15 billion crowns. It said that the Cunard cruise line was still suffering losses.

Ben Bailey to expand

BEN BAILEY, the Yorkshire housebuilder, intends to develop and expand its product range to take advantage of improved conditions in the housing market. Yesterday the company reported a rise in pre-tax profits to £462,000 from £16,000 in the six months to June 30. Earnings increased to 3.01p a share from 0.75p and the interim dividend, due on September 26, is doubled to 0.6p a share. The company said it sold 154 homes in the first half, up from 127, at an average price of £870,000, up from £80,000 in the first half of the previous year.

Defence deal for GPT

GPT, the telecommunications group, has won a Ministry of Defence service contract worth more than £100 million, creating up to 100 jobs. The company's Strategic Communications Systems division, based in Coventry, will support part of the MoD's new UK fixed telephone system. It will be responsible for maintaining the RAF's secure integrated communications network known as Uniter. GPT will provide about 200 maintenance and operations staff across the country. The new jobs come after the announcement by GPT of an extra 400 jobs in June in Liverpool, Nottingham, Coventry and Poole.

Ilion sales up by £23m

ILION, the computer distribution group previously known as Persona, raised pre-tax profits from £2.7 million to £4 million in the six months to end June, on sales up from £65 million to £88 million, in spite of the effects of the strong pound on sales and profits. The shares slipped 24p to 388½p but remain near their all-time high of 407½p. The half-year dividend rises from 1.7p to 2.0p out of earnings up from 9.0p to 11.0p. The group says that it now distributes the world's top five networking products across six European countries.

Bright outlook at Emess

EMESS, the international lighting group, lifted pre-tax profits to £2.8 million from £2.4 million in the six months to June, in spite of being hit by the strength of sterling. Operating profits in consumer lighting jumped 32 per cent, but those in the commercial division fell 11 per cent as sales slid 4 per cent. Earnings per share rose to 0.8p from 0.7p, but, as with last year, no interim dividend is being paid. The shares rose 4p to 21½p. Emess expects a gradual recovery in its commercial lighting business.

Brandon Hire slips

BRANDON HIRE, the tool, catering equipment and furniture hire company, reported a modest decline in pre-tax profits to £1.05 million (£901,000) in the six months to June 30, in spite of a rise in operating profits to £1.3 million from £1.1 million. Earnings were unchanged at 2.9p a share. The firm expects a substantially stronger second half as its recent sale of access equipment to Kestral Powered Access allows it to focus on the core tool hire business. The interim dividend, to be paid on October 17, has been lifted to 1.1p a share from 0.9p.

Limit's underwriter stake

LIMIT, the largest corporate vehicle investing in the Lloyd's of London insurance market, is taking a stake in the tiny underwriter CI de Rougemont. Alongside Riverside, a private investment group that is buying a 15 per cent stake, Limit is taking 10 per cent. Both have pledged to supply capital to de Rougemont's two syndicates, non-marine 732 and marine 112, on a long-term basis. Limit already controls the bigger Janson Green and Bankside underwriting agencies.

Creighton's loses £3.3m

CREIGHTON'S NATURALLY, the troubled manufacturer of toiletries, soaps and fragrances, had a pre-tax loss of £3.3 million for the year to March 31, compared with a £470,000 profit in the previous 12 months. There was an operating loss of just under £3 million and a £389,000 write-down of an investment. Losses of 33.9p a share compared with earnings of 5.3p previously. The company, which paid no interim dividend, is also passing payment of a final dividend. In the previous year there was a total dividend of 3.2p.

Virgin and Nomura consider rail sales

By FRASER NELSON

RICHARD BRANSON and Nomura Bank are set to become two of the last beneficiaries of the privatisation of British Rail through selling interests in their respective train companies next year.

Virgin Trains, which runs Cross Country and West Coast Trains franchises, has appointed Merrill Lynch to look at a £250 million flotation about next spring. Nomura, the Japanese bank, is considering an £800 million sale of Angel Trains, which it bought from the Government for £672 million in a deal with the management three years ago.

Both deals would make millions for their owners, and will be held as further evidence that the Government short-changed the taxpayer through enthusiasm to release the system to the private sector.

The two companies are already working closely together in the run-up to the £2.25 billion refurbishment on Vir-

NHS staff backed on pensions mis-selling

By CAROLINE MERRILL AND ANNE ASHWORTH

ALAN MILBURN, the Health Minister, is urging insurance companies involved in the pensions mis-selling scandal to speed up the reinstatement process.

Mr Milburn said that National Health Service workers were the biggest category of employees affected by the scandal, in which life insurance salesmen encouraged thousands of people to give up employers' pension plans in favour of less beneficial personal pensions.

Mr Milburn believes that up to 30,000 NHS staff may be affected, yet only 200 staff have so far been reinstated. He has asked Alec Cowan, the NHS pensions agency chief executive, to take all action possible on behalf of employees. However, Mr Milburn said: "The onus clearly lies with the industry in speed things up."

Earlier this month, Prudential, the UK's biggest insurance company, said that it had doubled its provisions against pensions mis-selling to £450 million. Measures to speed up the review process contributed to the provision increase. The Prudential will be offering 50,000 mis-selling victims a scheme guaranteeing that they will be no worse off in retirement. Many of the Prudential's cases include public-sector workers. Legal & General also offers a similar scheme.

Early retirement and high levels of redundancies among older workers are fueling the pension crisis, according to an organisation campaigning for the rights of the over-50s.

The Carnegie Third Age Programme has urged the Government to encourage older people to stay in employment and to demonstrate to companies the benefits of a mixed-age workforce. Third Age argues that the exclusion of over-50s from employment is reducing the fund for state pensions and increasing the burden on taxpayers. There are 2.8 million over-50s who are registered unemployed or "economically inactive".



Marlene Dietrich starring in *The Blue Angel*, featured in the Rohauer collection



Buster Keaton playing the starring role in *The General*

WC Fields in a typical pose

BA-American link 'merger from hell'

By JON ASHWORTH

THE proposed link-up between British Airways and American Airlines is a "merger from hell" that will lead to higher fares and falling standards, a group of visiting US congressmen heard yesterday.

Richard Branson, chairman of Virgin Atlantic, BA's arch-rival, said that the two airlines were far too big to get together, adding: "Fares will go up and the quality of service will go down..."

Bob Ayling, the BA chief executive, said he was "fairly confident" fares would not rise. Mr Ayling said: "Virgin wants to maintain its cosy position at Heathrow with

Improving car margins help Perry Group

PERRY GROUP, the accident repair and motor retailer, revealed a 19 per cent increase to £4.9 million in interim pre-tax profits yesterday, on the back of improving margins for new and second-hand cars (Mark Court writes).

Turnover at its Nationwide Crash Repair Centres rose 24 per cent to £26 million.

Richard Allan, the chairman and chief executive, is aiming for an 8 per cent net margin from the crash repair business, which is growing rapidly. "We are going to look for expansion into Europe," he said.

An interim dividend of 3.45p will be paid on 1 December, up 6 per cent from 3.25p.

Customers wasting money in accounts

By CAROLINE MERRILL

BANK and building society customers waste £130 million a year keeping their money in current accounts that do not pay interest, Abbey National has claimed.

Around a quarter of the UK's current account customers, a total of 61 million accounts, hold their cash in non-interest accounts, according to Abbey's annual banking survey.

Even those who do manage to earn interest on their current accounts are dissatisfied with the rates offered — 31 per cent (12.5 million accounts) wanted higher interest.

In general, bank and build-

ing society customers were unhappy with the way they are treated — 41 per cent claimed shoddy service, while one in three was unhappy with the charges levied.

In spite of the high levels of dissatisfaction, more than half (53 per cent) said that they would not move their accounts because they felt that it would be problematic.

However, the survey claims that two million people would seriously consider changing their account. Incentives to switch include free overdrafts, interest loyalty bonuses and ability to use branches other than their own.

Limit's underwriter stake

LIMIT, the largest corporate vehicle investing in the Lloyd's of London insurance market, is taking a stake in the tiny underwriter CI de Rougemont. Alongside Riverside, a private investment group that is buying a 15 per cent stake, Limit is taking 10 per cent. Both have pledged to supply capital to de Rougemont's two syndicates, non-marine 732 and marine 112, on a long-term basis. Limit already controls the bigger Janson Green and Bankside underwriting agencies.

Creighton's loses £3.3m

CREIGHTON'S NATURALLY, the troubled manufacturer of toiletries, soaps and fragrances, had a pre-tax loss of £3.3 million for the year to March 31, compared with a £470,000 profit in the previous 12 months. There was an operating loss of just under £3 million and a £389,000 write-down of an investment. Losses of 33.9p a share compared with earnings of 5.3p previously. The company, which paid no interim dividend, is also passing payment of a final dividend. In the previous year there was a total dividend of 3.2p.

US shoe group likely to bid for Sears shops



David Spitz and the Nine West group aim to expand in shoe retailing in the UK

NINE WEST, the American shoe group that last week bought 60 department store concessions from Sears' British Shoe Corporation, is likely to emerge as a bidder for part of the high street retailing business that BSC is set to put out to tender.

David Spitz, chairman of Shoe Studio Group, the British arm of Nine West, yesterday said: "We will be very interested in seeing the tender documents." The American group would act alone, rather than with a partner in buying any of BSC, he said. If it were to buy any shops, it would replace them

with branches of its Berrie, Nine West, Pied à Terre, Enzo Angiolini or CK chains.

Nine West, which is opening some of its own stores in the UK, has big ambitions to expand in Britain. Its purchase from BSC last week makes it the biggest department store concession operator in Britain, with more than 150 outlets. Its remaining competitors are Carvela-Kurt Geiger and Bally. Mr Spitz said that he was not aware of any other possible acquisitions in the UK beyond BSC.

JP Morgan, the merchant bank, is drawing up a range of tender documents for BSC. A number of other shoe companies are known to be interested in acquiring parts of BSC, but analysts believe that they will all be looking to buy at bargain prices.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Bank Buys

Australia S 2.26 2.16

Canada S 2.03 2.175

Cyprus Cyp 0.905 0.855

Denmark N 1.950 1.931

Finland F 2.29 2.25

France Fr 3.23 3.20

Germany Dm 3.11 2.67

Hong Kong S 1.48 1.45

Iceland I 1.07 1.07

Ireland Ir 5.05 5.24

Japan Yen 3.05 2.95

Malta M 0.672 0.615

Netherlands Gld 3.702 3.205

Norway N 2.25 2.25

Portugal Esc 51.02 50.00

S Africa R 2.25 2.25

Sweden Kr 2.05 2.05

Switzerland Fr 2.25 2.25

USA US 225.515 225.740

Notes: Small changes in bank rates only are shown. The figures are in £ million.

PLC: Different rates apply to Unilever's cheque book. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Somewhere between the 1996 and 1997 Laura Ashley annual reports, Sir Bernard Ashley dropped his title as honorary life president. Whether this was down to oversight, discretion on his part or wishful thinking on the part of the company's executives, it was not an indication of the irascible Sir Bernard's lessening involvement.

Never mind what interest he may have in preserving the legacy of his late wife's designs. Sir Bernard has around 24 million Laura Ashley shares, and there are another 20 million in family trusts. That holding, totalling up to around 35 per cent, has ensured that he keeps a close watch on the company, and, particularly, its share price, and not always from a distance. When his status as a tax exile allows, Sir Bernard makes his presence felt at Laura Ashley headquarters, as he has been doing recently.

So when the board declared its unanimous support for the chief executive, as it did yesterday, along with a warning of half-year losses of £4.5 million, Ann Iverson would be well advised not to take the sentiment too seriously. Sir Bernard was the decisive influence behind the appointment and then the departure of her last two predecessors, one of them another American with an impressive line in marketing jargon that somehow failed to translate to the bottom line.

Why a high-flying Goldman Sachs partner, John Thornton, would bother himself with taking on the chairmanship of a company in the LA league would be inexplicable, were it not for the fact that he was a trusted confidant of Sir Bernard.

That relationship must now be feeling the stress, since Sir Bernard's shares are now priced at just 55p. It is worth recalling that they were priced at 135p when the company floated in 1985 and Sir Bernard clearly believes that they should be a great deal higher than that.

This is the implication of a deal he entered into with a former LA chairman, Hugh Blakeway Webb, another of his place men who has felt dramatically from favour. A private deal between Sir Bernard and Mr Blakeway Webb required Sir B to buy Mr Blakeway Webb's shares should he leave the company. The price was a hefty £2 apiece, and it is a safe bet that over 10 years from now having to part with £8 million, Sir Bernard is still smarting.

Those close to him suggest that he would happily bail out of his stake, but not at this level. The fact that he has now countenanced the closure of two factories, a previously unthinkable

A very private entrepreneur

Will Whithorn, factotum of Richard Branson's Virgin empire, has been engaged in one of the more subtle arts of City spin-doctoring: floating the idea of a flotation. Virgin Rail, franchisee of North West Main Line and the Midlands cross-country network, might raise money for some £800

COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

move, indicates that he may be beginning to recognise the scale of the company's problems.

But if John Thornton is a true friend, he may have to counsel Sir Bernard to lower his expectations. If Georgette Mosbacher still believes that she can turn Laura Ashley into a truly international brand, then shareholders should encourage her to have a go, and hand over their stock before the price falls further.

The boss himself played cautious statesman yesterday, insisting the matter was merely "under discussion". Unless Virgin is really stuck for finance, it should go no further than that.

Mr Branson is a brilliant, if erratic, entrepreneur in the old mode. Recognising that, he made one of his best decisions when he realised that floating Virgin Group had been a mistake and took it private again in 1988. The City likes winners, but in the long run does not appreciate strong-willed mavericks. Still less did Mr Branson care for the City. Some followed suit. Others and more recently Anita and

Gordon Roddick, have envied his timely move.

Private ownership allows the confident to back their hunches and take risks, so long as they are not clear whether this would include Mr Branson's stake in Eurostar, the property group and would-be cross-Channel railway company.

The boss himself played cautious statesman yesterday, insisting the matter was merely "under discussion". Unless Virgin is really stuck for finance, it should go no further than that.

Mr Branson is a brilliant, if erratic, entrepreneur in the old mode. Recognising that, he made one of his best decisions when he realised that floating Virgin Group had been a mistake and took it private again in 1988. The City likes winners, but in the long run does not appreciate strong-willed mavericks. Still less did Mr Branson care for the City. Some followed suit. Others and more recently Anita and

his valuable franchise, creating a built-in conflict with potential third-party investors in one bit or another. Only lack of would-be rail partners can explain Mr Branson toying with a flotation of this outpost of empire.

If he went ahead, an army of Branson fans would doubtless back it. But few would bet against them living to regret it.

Watch where the money goes

Not all investment trusts

are out of favour, despite the general malaise in the sector. Value and Income Trust remains at premium to assets and yesterday it received a resounding vote of confidence from the City when its £15 million debenture issue found plenty of takers at a gross yield of just 7.7 per cent.

This, boasts Matthew Oakeshott, is the cheapest long-term money to be raised by an investment trust since Roy Jenkins was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr Oakeshott recalls that period fondly, having been an adviser to the said Chancellor.

But now he and Angela Lascelles run OLIM, the fund

manager behind Value and Income. When the pair moved into VIT 11 years ago, it had assets of £7.5 million. After yesterday's issue, that figure has swelled to £100 million. So it may be worth taking note of where they intend to put the new money.

Most of it is headed towards the smaller companies which have not been beneficiaries of the stock market's bull run and should therefore avoid being the victims of the bears when they take over.

There is a growing enthusiasm for the second liners, both manufacturing and service companies. But VIT will also channel some of the new money into property, believing that while the institutions drive up the price of prime investments, there are less obviously attractive buildings which offer a generous return. The record suggests that OLIM's actions may be worth copying.

Between friends

THOSE sound bureaucrats at the Paris-based OECD, doubtless fearing ostracism from the delights of polite official society, argue that it does not matter that Germany will fail the 3 per cent deficit test for joining the euro. Their forecast of 3.4 per cent for 1997 is, they say, "well within the range of normal statistical revision". Quite so. They omit to note that normal statistical revision could just as easily push the deficit over 3.5 per cent.

Reform 'needed to cut German jobless rate'

BY GRAHAM SEARJANT, FINANCIAL EDITOR

UNEMPLOYMENT will remain at more than four million in Germany next year and is unlikely to fall fast unless many more structural reforms are made, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development said in its annual report on the country.

The Paris-based economics agency projects that, after rising from 4 million to 4.3 million this year, unemployment will merely edge down to 4.2 million, or 10.9 per cent, in 1998. Recovery in the economy has been unbalanced, it says, leading initially to a fall in employment.

Growth is relying too much on exports from Europe and the recent weakness of the mark. Fiscal measures to meet the Maastricht tests for eco-

nomic and monetary union by the end of this year have left domestic demand flat.

Germany will still miss two of these targets on OECD projections, even though growth is expected to accelerate to 2.4 per cent this year and 2.6 per cent in 1998. But the OECD excuses these failures and argues that starting the euro on time is vital to long-term reform and new jobs.

It says the budget deficit will come down to 3.4 per cent this year and 2.7 per cent in 1998 before allowing for the net impact of tax cuts. But its economists maintain: "The difference from 3 per cent is well within the range of normal statistical revision so at this deficit level the criterion could be effectively regarded

as being met." Germany will also just break the rule that national debt must not be more than 60 per cent of national income, a test likely to be widely flouted by other countries.

The debt ratio is projected to rise again in 1998 to about 62 per cent. But the OECD says that this mainly because of unification.

The report chastises the German Government, and by implication even more the opposition, for delays in bringing forward cuts in taxes, state pensions and industrial subsidies, and in reforming healthcare. It complains that Germany's economic debate focuses too much on fairness rather than the need for a dynamic response to a chang-

ing global and European economy" and the "overwhelming requirement" to create jobs.

The economists criticise efforts to protect people from rapid change. The speed and impact of reforms has been "seriously impaired by generous transition arrangements".

Given sluggish domestic growth, there is no cause to tighten monetary policy. OECD economists concluded, commenting on the day the Bundesbank left its repo rates unchanged, making a full year at 3 per cent.

Should growth prove too sluggish to cut the budget deficit, they say it would be better to accelerate privatisation of state assets than to put on extra excise duties or other ad hoc taxes.

Stoves sales boosted by windfalls

STOVES, Britain's only big independent cooker manufacturer, lifted pre-tax profits to £5.2 million, from £4.3 million, in the year to May 31, on turnover that rose to £80 million from £63 million (Chris Ayres writes).

The company said that sales were being boosted by building society windfall payouts.

Stoves also yesterday disclosed plans to export to Germany and America. It said that its European investments would be phased according to currency exchange rates, while deliveries to America would start next month.

Earnings per share fell slightly, from 14.2p to 13.9p. A final dividend of 3.5p will be paid on October 15, taking the total dividend to 5.8p, up 11.5 per cent.

Tempus, page 26

New chief quits at Watmoughs

BY MARK COURT

DECLAN MURPHY has resigned as chief executive of Watmoughs, the printer, just eight months into the job and four weeks away from the company's interim results.

His departure comes after mounting pressure from institutions, alarmed by a succession of profits warnings and a sharp fall in Watmoughs's shares since Mr Murphy took the helm.

Patrick Walker, chairman, who ran Watmoughs for 30 years, is restored as chief executive.

Mr Murphy, 37, had a management style that won him few friends in the City. One broker said: "He was considered to be very arrogant and people didn't like him. Anyone taking over from Patrick was going to have a tough time, but he went the wrong way about it. He took the

attitude that he didn't need the City and that he could run the business as he saw fit."

Mr Murphy was on a one-year rolling contract and is likely to receive around £180,000 in compensation.

Watmoughs's shares rose 4.5p to 48p yesterday. They traded at 48p on Friday.

One analyst commented: "The return of Patrick Walker will add a degree of stability to the business which should allow the share price to start recovering. Institutions are pleased to have him back."

The printing sector has suffered from overseas competition, high paper prices and low margins. Analysts expect pre-tax figures on September 17 to be as low as £6 million compared with £10.8 million last time.

Tempus, page 26

Buoyant Pifco still on prowl

PIFCO HOLDINGS, the household appliance manufacturer whose takeover talks with Kenwood, its larger rival, fell through last month, said yesterday that it was looking for another acquisition (Chris Ayres writes).

The company reported a 23 per cent increase in profits to £3.8 million, from £3.12 million, for the year to the April 30.

Michael Webber, the chairman, said: "We're looking for acquisitions within the same industry which produce small household appliances. We have £7.5 million net cash so we are in a very good position."

Pifco will pay a final dividend of 3.5p (3.15p) on October 22, bringing the total dividend to 6p (5.45p).

Millennium effect lifts computer pay at Parity

BY CHRIS AYRES

THE WAGES of computer consultants rose by as much as 20 per cent last year, with some freelances earning up to 30 per cent more than they could in a permanent position, according to Parity, a leading IT services provider.

Parity employs more than 3,500 permanent staff and has about 70,000 freelances in Britain and Europe. Its share price surged yesterday by 39.1p to 53.1p.

Parity says the wage rises have been caused by the massive volume of work needed to solve the millennium problem and EMU conversion, convert computers to recognise the euro currency, and set up complex intranet and Internet systems.

Paul Davies, Parity's chief executive, said: "Even if you take away the windfall of the millennium problem and EMU conversion, we have still had a lot of business associated with intranet and Internet systems. We have been especially active with consultancy. When people realise the cost of solving the millennium problem they often decide to replace the system. If they're going to spend money, they may as well spend it wisely."

For the six months to June 30, pre-tax profits rose 32 per cent, from £4.3 million to £5.7 million, on turnover of £91 million, up 19.7 per cent from £76 million. Earnings per share rose 32 per cent, from 6.75p to 8.9p, and the interim dividend, due November 12, rose from 1.4p to 1.8p.

Tempus, page 26



Paul Davies, left, with David Firth, finance director

B&J takes over rival cut-price retailer

BY CHRIS AYRES

BROWN & JACKSON, the troubled cut-price retail group that owns Poundstretcher, is acquiring Your More Store, a rival discount chain, for £7.65 million.

Your More Store, with 127 outlets in Scotland and the North of England, is wholly owned by Pektor, the South African retail group that is also the principal shareholder in Brown & Jackson.

Your More Store was founded by Johan Visser, the current chief executive of Brown & Jackson, in Scotland six years ago. In the year to June 30 it earned net profits of £7.5 million on turnover of £34.7 million.

Brown & Jackson also disclosed a reduction in pre-tax losses to £2.7 million from £9 million in the year to June 30. Losses fell to 2.1p a share from 21.5p. There is again no profit.

Turnover rose 12 per cent from £167.4 million to £187.4 million, helping the company to report its first operating profits for five years of £500,000, compared with a loss of £3.1 million in the same period last year.

Despite the general upturn in consumer spending Brown & Jackson's like-for-like sales grew only 1 per cent.

Mr Visser said: "The current boom is happening above where we operate. The people who are enjoying the boom through windfall payments are not in the lower income brackets, which make up most of our customers."

More Power for your Money



G6-233M

- Intel 233MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 32MB EDO RAM (expandable to 128MB)
- 512K L2 Cache
- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Disk Drive
- Mitsumi 12X min/24X max 120ms CD-ROM Drive
- Quantum® 3.2GB 10ms Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- Promise Ultra ATA Controller
- Esonic® Wavelet 32-bit PCI SoundCard
- Boston Acoustics® MicroMedia 5W Speakers with 15W Subwoofer
- STB® VIRGE® GX 3D Graphics Accelerator with 4MB EDO RAM, 170MHz RAMDAC
- US Robotics Sportster Winmodem® with x2™ technology (56Kbps*)
- 19" EV900 TCO-92, 0.26dp Monitor
- ATX Tower Case
- Microsoft® Windows® 95 MS IntelliMouse®
- MS® Windows 95, MS IntelliMouse®
- MS Office 97 Small Business Edition plus Encarta® 97 (US version) and MS Money 97
- 3 Year Limited Warranty

£1749 (£2089.15 inc. VAT & Delivery)

Drop by the Gateway 2000 Showroom and test our wide range of PCs for yourself!

10 Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9HE.

Showroom Hours of Business:

12.30 pm - 6.30 pm Mondays

9.30 am - 6.30 pm Tuesday - Friday

10.00 am - 4.00 pm Saturdays

Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays

GATEWAY 2000
0 8 0 0 7 4 2 0 0 0
<http://www.gw2k.co.uk>



Gateway 2000 • Clonsilla Industrial Estate • Dublin 17 • Ireland
GATEWAY 2000, Intel and Intel Inside are trademarks or registered trademarks of Gateway 2000 Inc. The Intel Inside Logo and Pentium are registered trademarks and MMX is a trademark of Intel Corporation. All other brands and product names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies. All configurations and prices are subject to change without notice or obligation. All prices quoted in Sterling. All site prices subject to change without notice or obligation. All site prices subject to change without notice or obligation.

Capital sues over 'conspiracy'

BY DOMINIC WALSH

STOCK MARKET

CLARE STEWART

Shares near 5,000 again as Dow sets the pace

A US-led rally and receding fears of higher interest rates helped the London stock market to recover further ground after recent uncertainty.

A strong overnight gain on Wall Street fuelled early gains, with US traded stocks making good progress.

The FTSE 100 gained new momentum, following the more confident tone set by the Dow Jones. By the close the index of leading shares had moved back through 4,900 to close up 70.2 at 4,914.2, just off its best of the day.

But volumes remained thin, with around 583 million shares traded, and dealers remain cautious on the strength of the recovery, dependent as it is on Wall Street's lead.

Ahead of retail sales figures due today, groups such as Kingfisher were in demand, putting on 171p to 7341p. While Next moved up 20p to 741p.

MFI rose 4p to 159p, helped by a positive broker recommendation, while Carpetright added 16p to 5371p.

Argos rallied 7p to 6281p after interim figures on Monday. Analysts at UBS, the broker, have trimmed full-year forecasts for the catalogue retailer, but remain buyers of the stock.

Supermarkets found selective form, with Tesco putting on 12p to 4161p and Kwik Save up 10p to 320p. Safeway saw 25p higher at 381p, on news of new price cuts.

Wm Morrison Supermarket, the Bradford group, was the most heavily traded of second liners, with talk of a chunk of shares being placed. More than 11 million changed hands, with the price edging up 1p to 180p.

News of factory closures left Laura Ashley, the struggling fashion group, down a penny at 551p with more than three million shares traded, while further break-up speculation lifted WH Smith 20p higher to 375p. The group won shareholder approval to buy back up to 10 per cent of its share capital at its AGM yesterday.

US traded stocks moved up with Wall Street's strength. Reed International rose 15p to 5581p, while drug groups were also strong. Zeneca added 52p to 19.42, while Glaxo Wellcome put on 30p to 12.3112.

Woolsey, the building materials group, jumped more than 5 per cent, rising 24p to



Michael Webber, of Pifco, which rose 5p on takeover talk

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

£26.00 target price. Barclays rose 11p to £13.931p. It continued its share buyback programme, spending £13.8 million on one million shares at £13.86. Lloyds TSB put on 29p to 750p, the Halifax, which reports interim figures tomorrow, closed 12p higher at 7311p, while the Woolwich rose 61p to 2961p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in US interest rates appeared to ease. The Midland-based group earns nearly half its profits in the US. Yesterday's move back up made it the top performer among FTSE 100 shares.

Banks were up again, with HSBC recovering some ground despite further falls in the Hong Kong market. The share rose 791p to 21.701p, while Nodd moved up 20p to 741p.

Speculation about the future of Hambros, the troubled merchant bank, resurfaced.

4601p, as concerns over a rise in

wings

At a recent business conference in Dublin, Pat O'Neill, chief executive of Avonmore Foods, shared the platform with several high-flyers from the world of computer technology and a government minister.

After listening to a few self-congratulatory speeches about how the Irish Republic is embracing the world of information technology and benefiting from the apparent largesse of the big global players in the industry, Mr O'Neill delivered a few home truths. Big multinationals were all very well, he said, but don't lose sight of what is happening in indigenous industries. Look at the strides they have made in finding export markets for their products, the major job expansion and remember that, for the most part, these companies do not get government assistance. They are Irish-owned and are here to stay.

After 35 years in the Irish food industry, Mr O'Neill knows a thing or two about staying power — and most of the audience had to

concede that. Just weeks after steering through the biggest corporate merger in the Republic's history, a deal that creates the world's fourth-biggest dairy processing company, they were prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt on the issue of Irish companies on the world stage.

Now at the helm of the merged Avonmore Waterford Group (AWG), Mr O'Neill, 59, has postponed his retirement until 1999 because of the merger. He said: "I was going to leave at 60, but I have been asked to stay and I want to see this through."

Mr O'Neill joined the Kilkenny-based group in 1973, shortly after the region's house committee of more than 20 co-operative societies merged to become Avonmore co-op. After a decade of rapid growth spurred by the common agricultur-

al policy, the organisation was forced to make serious cutbacks when quotas were introduced in 1984. Three years later, the co-op's farmers decided the best way to fund expansion was a stock market flotation. A second rights issue in 1991 reduced the co-op's stake in Avonmore Foods to 63 per cent.

Last month those same farmers and their colleagues from Waterford co-op turned out in their thousands to vote for the merger of two of the Republic's leading food companies. The share transfer deal creates a group with annual sales of Ir£2.5 billion and operating profits of Ir£100 million. AWG operates in

the Republic, Britain and the US. It has a milk pool of more than one billion gallons and cheese production capacity close to 350,000 tonnes. It processes around 1.7 million pigs and almost as many sheep annually. The combined Avonmore and Waterford co-op now owns a 55 per cent stake in the new company.

Mr O'Neill is confident the scale of the combined AWG operations will give AWG a leading market position as the consolidation in the food industry gathers pace. He believes the company will benefit from the

increasing shift by major retailers to one big producer. "When we go into any of the major multiples now the AWG will be seen as a very important part of the British food industry and I believe that will give us a pivotal position there," he said.

The UK, which will account for £1 billion of AWG's sales, is also likely to suffer casualties under the current examination of operations, although Mr O'Neill refused to be drawn on the subject. Analysts have suggested that Waterford's whey plant in Appleby, Cumbria, and Avonmore's cheese plants in Llanelli, north Wales, and Whitchurch, Shropshire, will be

candidates for closure. "We have a combined 15 per cent of the UK liquid milk market and we believe we need to get up to north of 20 per cent," Mr O'Neill said. "I think you are going to see four or five players who will emerge as the leaders with 20 per cent each and we want to be one of them."

Although AWG already has a substantial share of the UK's cheese production, largely because of Waterford's recent acquisition of The Cheese Company, he thinks there may be scope for infills in its range, particularly in continental cheeses. In America there is already speculation that one or two cheese facilities will be sold or become part of new joint-venture arrangements.

In the Republic, savings are likely to be sought in administration and in such areas as milk

collection and processing. Some analysts have suggested job losses could be as high as 600. Analysts anticipate savings of Ir£15 million to Ir£20 million in the first year of combined operations.

Mr O'Neill is convinced changing patterns of food consumption in Asia, particularly China, over the next decade will provide most opportunities for expansion by Western companies, including AWG. However, he is worried that the present EU quota regime for many foods is restricting their ability to access those markets.

The solution, he believes, lies in a two-tier quota system. "One quota to provide a guaranteed price for a certain quantity of produce and another quota under which people would produce what they wanted at world market prices," he said. Mr O'Neill has given warning that if something is not done quickly, only companies from Australia, New Zealand and Canada will be in a position to tap into these rapidly expanding markets.

B&Q hammers in its message while rivals are left trailing

A shake-out in the DIY sector is inevitable, says Sarah Cunningham.

If you ever want to annoy the normally genial Jim Hodgkinson, try suggesting that B&Q, the do-it-yourself (DIY) company he chairs, has been helped to its market-leading position by good luck.

"Luck? It's not luck, it's hard work," he exclaims. But while no one disputes that B&Q's current success is partly the result of hard work, there is also general agreement that in the past 18 months, it has been very lucky.

"B&Q is clearly in pole position" and doing far better than anyone else in DIY, says John Richards, retail analyst at NatWest Markets, adding: "in an aside guaranteed to infuriate Mr Hodgkinson — 'It has had a lot of luck.'

B&Q's good fortune is that all the other major DIY retailers have been through some sort of turmoil just at the point that their market was beginning to recover along with the surge in house buying. The current year is expected to be the best for the DIY sector since the boom of the Eighties. And while Do It All, Homebase and Wickes have had nasty problems to deal with, B&Q has been able to romp off with market share.

The question all the chains are having to face is how they will cope when market conditions turn less favourable. Exactly when that will be is anyone's guess, but even the bullish Mr Hodgkinson thinks the DIY market will be tougher next year than this year.

B&Q's strategy is quite simple — it wants to build its market share. In the overall DIY market, it now claims nearly 19 per cent, while among the larger chains it reckons to have 43 per cent, up 3.5 per cent on a year ago. Mr Hodgkinson would like to see that grow to 60 per cent.

He thinks that B&Q has only one serious competitor: Sainsbury's Homebase. That business's particular problems arise from the Texas chain



Fewer B&Q Warehouses were opened last year than originally planned, reportedly an issue between Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy and Jim Hodgkinson

from Ladbrooke for £250 million. This deal catapulted Homebase into second place in the DIY market, but it has also cost far more than expected to integrate the two very different chains.

Although the Texas logo has now disappeared and all the stores are now known as Homebase, only about 40 out of the nearly 200 former Texas stores have been fully converted.

Sales in the unconverted stores have dragged down the performance of the whole Homebase business, and some analysts say, the poor

TEXAS stores may have damaged the otherwise good image of Homebase.

Wickes's problems are quite different. It has spent the past year buried in accounting problems after the discovery of a £1 million black hole and is being run by a new set of managers. Its previous managers are under investigation by the Serious Fraud Office.

Do It All, now wholly owned by Boots after buying out WH Smith's half share, has been struggling with a major store closure programme. It is downmarket of Homebase

and observers believe that it has been struggling to build a stronger brand. Although as part of the highly profitable Boots group, its problems have been obscured, a recent trading statement suggested that it was not enjoying the sort of sales growth its competitors have reported.

Fortunes can change very quickly in DIY, however. The picture at B&Q is very different from a year and a half ago, before the market had shown any signs of recovery, when it had to report a 33 per cent slump in annual profits. According to widespread rumour at the time, Mr Hodgkinson, then chief executive, came close to leaving the company after falling out with Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy, the chief executive of Kingfisher, its parent.

The reputed row was about

the speed of expansion of the B&Q Warehouse chain. While Sir Geoffrey wanted to cut spending on it, Mr Hodgkinson was apparently pushing to keep up the pace.

In the event, Mr Hodgkinson stayed, and he now denies that any row took place. What is

certain is that the number of Warehouses opened last year was less than originally planned and that Mr Hodgkinson was shifted from the chief executive's to the chairman's seat at B&Q. There are now two people — Bill Whiting and Martin Toogood — looking after operations, while Mr Hodgkinson is handling strategy, including the expansion into Taiwan and beyond.

There is just one B&Q store now open in Taiwan, with a further two set to open this year. An agreement has been signed to open a fourth next year and Mr Hodgkinson reckons there is scope for 25 stores in Taiwan. Mr Hodgkinson says other markets are being looked at: "Everyone looks at China, but it is not easy, not like doing an opening in the UK. We have nothing planned yet," he says.

Back in the UK, all the DIY retailers were piqued by a recent National Consumer Council survey that showed that fewer than seven customers in ten think they are well

helped in their stores. The bitterest complaints were about unhelpful and inexperienced staff, slow service and long queues.

Mr Hodgkinson says that DIY is a difficult market in which to operate: "If you buy food, you don't ask for recipes and if you buy clothes, you don't ask how the trousers are made," he says. The company's answer has been to employ more people aged 50 and over, who have years of DIY experience and more former tradesmen. The problem here, as a rival DIY retailer points out, is that tradesmen do not necessarily want to act as shop assistants and are not necessarily the best communicators.

Andy Randall, head of operations at Do It All, said that customers are always put first while Ross McLaren, managing director of Homebase, said that the criticism from customers was "disheartening". But they all have had to come up with a strong defence of their service levels.

Verdict: the retail consultancy, is as damning as the consumers themselves. It calls it a "do-it-yourself" rather than

well help you" market and says that "Service should be key in DIY. There are few other retailing sectors where a product is less ready to use and where shopping is a trial rather than a pleasurable experience."

But Mr Richards points out that B&Q is unlikely to worry too much about service while its competitors remain in disarray and while across the sector as a whole, low margins and rising rents mean that no one is going to splash out on boosting checkout staff levels in the way supermarkets have done.

Another problem that worries the sector as a whole is that there are simply too many DIY outlets. As soon as the market begins to fade, there will have to be another round of closures and perhaps even some further consolidations.

All eyes are now on the housing market. B&Q has done more than its rivals to build defences against a downturn, but not enough of luck will stop it from suffering if, as in the past, the good times for the DIY sector disappear as quickly as they appeared.

What crisis?

I SEE Norman "je ne regrette rien" Lamont hasn't lost his touch. The man who brought you the ERM crisis now chairs the Indonesia Fund, and his chairman's statement, coming at the end of six months when the fund underperformed the Jakarta composite index, is about as informative as his alleged off-licence bills.

"Any concerns over comparisons between Thailand and Indonesia are unlikely to be validated," the former Chancellor tells investors. "Unlike

Thailand, the Indonesian economy is currently enjoying one of its best economic cycles ... this backdrop has helped to maintain the stability of the devaluation of the Thai baht."

Clearly, Lamont wrote this before the Indonesian rupiah freely floated, suffering a 20 per cent devaluation and causing the market to crash. But he was never one to let a currency crisis bother him.

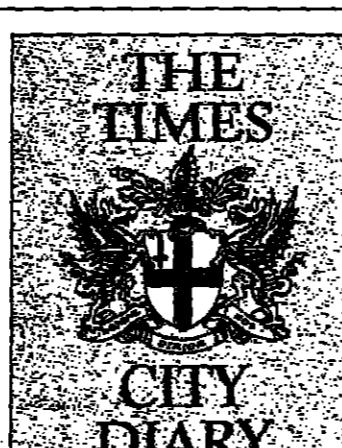
Petty sessions

ANOTHER TRUST chairman with South-East Asian interests is Robin Boyle, the former stockbroker now heading Athelney Trust. Boyle, who was the Boyle in Pember Boyle and Dunbar before "downshifting" to Cornwall, is now running a restaurant and guest house called Memories of Malaya housed in a former 18th-century coaching inn.

But in spite of being just 11 miles from Rock — or "Pulham-by-the-Sea" as it is known — business is slow. "The locals don't care for spicy food," Boyle tells me. However he is converting a large upstairs room — which used to be used as a petty sessions court — into a huge suite that he will rent out at "exorbitant rates". Looks like the place for Michael Hardwick to hatch his Co-op plot.



"I'm afraid the pattern emerging is not a very pretty one."



• WHAT is Sir Terence Conran up to? First pre-processed chips are discovered being delivered to his swanky Bluebird Cafe, then one finds an interesting range of products on sale at his intimate Quaglino's restaurant. Alongside the colognes in the gentlemen's rest rooms is a notice saying "emergency supplies are also available". Whatever can this mean?

Safe bet

MY NEWLY instituted Rod Stewart award for generosity goes to the Bristol & West Building Society. It is planning to renew its sponsorship of

Bristol Rugby Club. Under the old deal, the rugby union team was offering a line out of incentives including £50,000 for winning the Courage League (as was), £20,000 for victory in the Flikkington Cup or £50,000 if Bristol were the European champions. In the end Bristol had a less than storming season and picked up only £20,000 for scoring more than 40 tries. And the building society didn't even shell out for that as it paid £10,000 for an insurance policy to cover the payouts. It is currently talking to Lloyd's of London about a new policy. My man with the oval ball and the oranges at half-time is not betting on a wildly increased premium this year.

• TOMKINS, I hear, is looking for a new non-executive director. The group has only three and admits that Charles Gates — who joined when Tomkins bought his company last year — is not exactly independent. Another non-exec is Roger Holland, the former chief executive of Cray Electronics, now Anite. In spite of the argy-bargy surrounding Anite, Ian Duncan, the Tomkins finance director, is quick to Holland's defence. "He's a very capable businessman." Tell that to Anite's shareholders.

Undercover

A SCURVILOUS suggestion reaches my ears as to why Scottish Media —

the TV group that changed its name when it bought *The Herald* in Glasgow — was willing to pay 20p a share to pick up a 29.9 per cent stake in Ulster TV last week. The story is that Scottish's chief executive Gus Macdonald, using the skill he picked up as an investigative journalist, discovered that Lord Hollick's United News & Media was just about to make a bid for Ulster at 20p a share. So to thwart the Labour peer, and curry favour with his Ulster-born director, Mirror Group man David Montgomery, Gus slipped in first. Impressive, if true.

JASON NISSE



Lord Hollick's bid for a stake in Ulster TV was thwarted

How our mutual friends sustain the buying

Grey Friday, we had that all right. So why no Black Monday? Market talk has been of 1987, when after a small rise in interest rates, the Dow fell 30 per cent in few days. The charts have been looking ominously similar to 1987: a bull run reaching a speculative climax, equity yields a fraction of real bond yields, and talk of rising rates.

Was this just a muted dress rehearsal, or are we in a different kind of market? In two respects we are. Since 1987 there has been an explosive growth in mutual funds (unit trusts) in England for the small private investor in the US — only 2 per cent of the total market in 1987, but, according to figures from the Bank Credit Analyst, nearly a quarter of total market capitalisation. At the same time the pension funds have increasingly switched out of direct shareholding into index-matching funds. (The same

net savings shown in the US national income figures. US investors are at present happy to finance much spending with credit card and mortgage debt, so that they have more to spare for investment.

ANTHONY HARRIS **Studious** readers may be reminded of the fatal role of broker loans in the 1929 boom and crash, and they are right. There are obviously horrendous risks in a credit-financed bull market: in a real crash, citizens might be unable to repay their credit card and mortgage loans, and so undermine the whole system. So far, though, this only seems to worry a few occupational pessimists like Jim Grant of the *Interest Rate Observer*, and no doubt the governors of the Fed, who give warning of "irrational" share prices. So far, though, they have failed to check the excitement. They wish they knew the secret.

And what about the professionally managed pension funds, which are meant to be sophisticated? Most of them have managed so poorly that trustees have demanded a switch into index-matching funds, which do just that. Such funds are virtually bound to stay invested. So no selling and no worries? Hardly. A crash may be delayed; but the later it comes, the bigger it may be.

Notice to existing investors

WOOLWICH

WOOLWICH GUERNSEY LIMITED

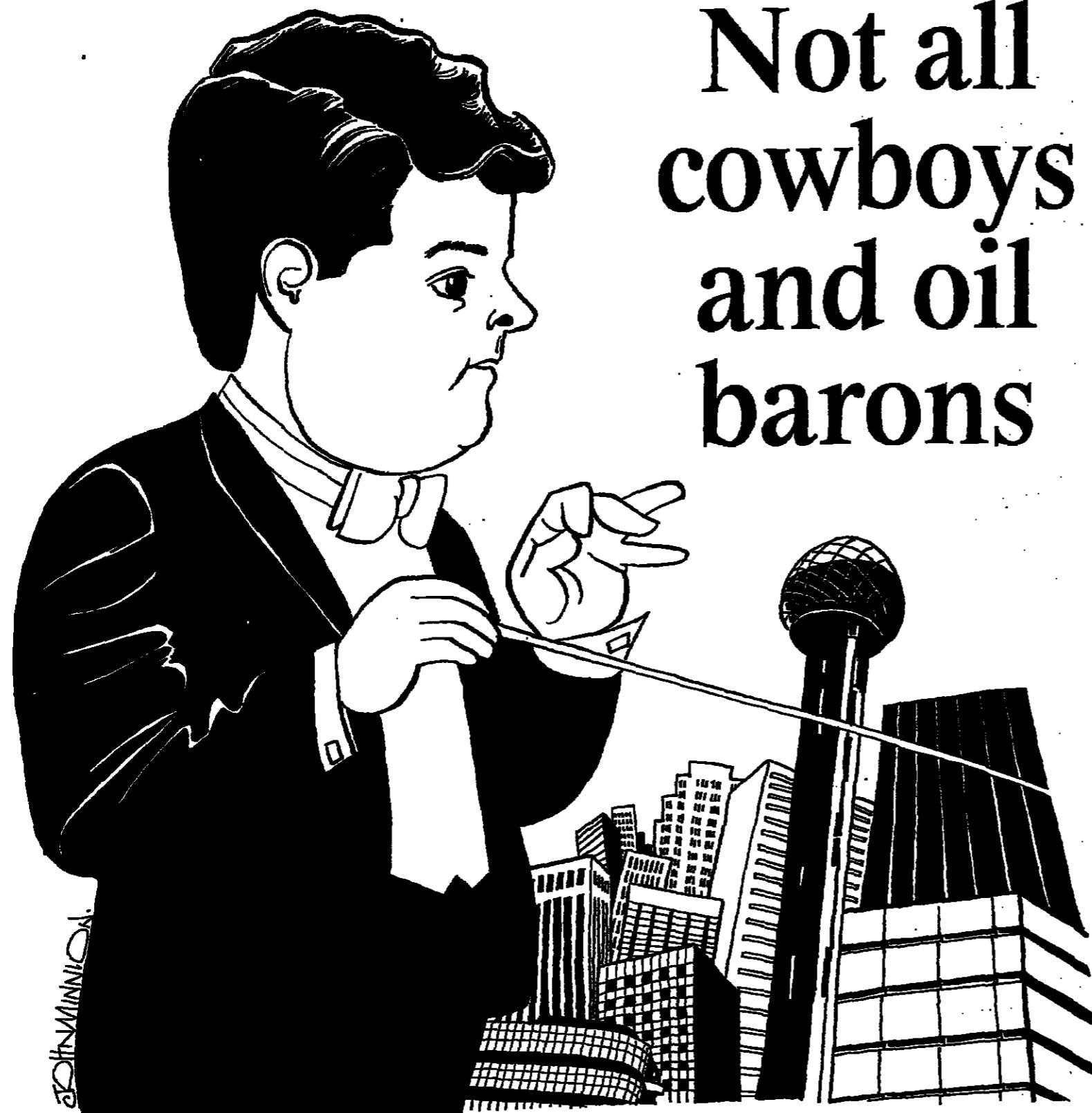
New Interest Rates

With effect from 18th August 1997

	Sterling	International	Gross p.a.
•	£500 — £9,989	6.00%	
Gross Account*	£10,000 — £29,999	6.50%	
With instant access	£40,000 — £99,999	6.90%	
	£100,000 — £249,999	7.10%	
	£250,000 — £999,999	7.25%	
	£1 million +	7.35%	

Principal Place of Business and Registered Office: Woolwich Guernsey Limited, PO Box 341, La Torre House, Les Banques, St Peter Port, Gu

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SHEET



Not all cowboys and oil barons

Dallas has set about building itself a world-class orchestra, and the results can be judged at the Proms in London this weekend. Richard Morrison reports

In some towns you can smell the ambition. Dallas is such a place. Its improbably skewed skyscrapers are more ostentatious than you find anywhere else; its entrepreneurs hungrier for the deal; its mansions more palatial; its football team the costliest in America; its can-do bravado exuberant even by Texas standards.

Perhaps there is something a bit pathological about the place, as though a strenuous demonstration of corporate America at its most dazzling will somehow expunge all memory of one black day in November 1963. But whatever makes Dallas tick, it ticks loud and clear.

So when the city decided to pick up its venerable orchestra and hurl it into the musical superleague, there was no doubt in anybody's mind (at least in north Texas) that the name of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra would soon be up there with New York, Chicago and Boston. Has it arrived yet? That may be judged on Sunday night, when the Dallas Symphony performs American music and Tchaikovsky under the direction of Andrew Litton (left), the young American appointed as its music director three years ago. But if bags of money, determination and civic pride count for anything, Dallas could soon top the league.

It financial circumstances are already enough to turn any British orchestral manager green with envy. In the late 1980s, backed by nearly \$100 million of corporate, private and city money, Dallas engaged one of the world's most expensive architects, I.M. Pei (of Louvre pyramid fame), to build a concert hall that would astound the world. The gamble paid off: Pei's extraordinary creation, with its eye-popping dome, vast foyers of the purest Italian marble, showboat-style interior and revolutionary acoustic design

(by Russell Johnson, who would later do the same for Birmingham), became a night-time showcase for smart Dallas society.

Ticket sales soared. Dallas has now completed its eighth successive sold-out season. It is one of only five American orchestras currently operating without a deficit. Our marketing manager has just been in London to advise your Royal Opera House, says Eugene Bonelli, the orchestra's president, with only the merest trace of glee.

But ticket sales are only the half of it. Private and corporate giving on a truly Texan scale brings the orchestra a further \$6 million a year. Social events run by a committee of rich ladies add \$1 million annually.

That level of fundraising has enabled the orchestra to take a bold step: rather than waiting for the culturally apathetic TV networks to broadcast orchestral concerts, the Dallas Symphony is financing

and filming its own series of music programmes aimed at children. These are then passed on to TV stations for broadcast.

Now there is a drive to take the orchestra's endowment fund, currently \$45 million, up to \$100 million by the centenary season in 2000, in order to attract the best players on top salaries. That eye-popping figure won't be the biggest in America. The Boston Symphony has an astonishing \$130 million stashed away. But no orchestra has accelerated quicker from small-town band to international status. Dallas is a wealthy city, and people here see investment in their orchestra as very important to the city's image, and hence to its future wealth," Bonelli says.

The biggest change in Dallas's life, however, has been the arrival of Litton as music director. He was just 34 when he came and still looks like a puppyish high-school student. The appointment was risky and surprising. Even today,

"That would be an ironic twist of fate for me," Litton says. "When I was in England we were going to do Mahler's Eighth for the Bournemouth orchestra's centenary, but the funding was withdrawn by the local council who felt we should be doing English music. So, like Scarlett O'Hara on the cart at the end of Part One of *Gone With the Wind*, I vowed that this would never happen to me again."

Will the Eighth bring

Litton's Mahler cycle to a close? "Possibly," he says. "I said that I would wait until I was 40 before conducting the Ninth; you should have lived some before attempting that piece. Well, I turn 40 in May 1999, so there is time to slot it in before 2000."

If civic pride counts at all, Dallas will soon top the musical league?

most big American orchestras seem to feel that they ought to hire ancient central European maestros with thick accents and dictatorial manners.

Moreover, Litton, though a Juilliard-educated New Yorker, was hardly rated in his native land, having spent six years getting to know the delights of south-west England as conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. But now, fewer than 21 conductors were auditioned by the Dallas orchestra; he got the nod – and, presumably, a salary hike of impressive proportions from his take-home pay as maestro of Dorset. And he has been a massive success in Dallas. "The city has taken him to its heart," Bonelli says.

His style – warm, urbane, romantic – must have come as a shock after his authoritarian predecessor, the Mexican, Eduardo Mata. There are basically two types of conductor," Litton says candidly. "Control freaks, and people who want the music to come out naturally. I am one of the latter. I like working with professionals, who will help to evolve the interpretation. I like interaction; that's why I enjoy jazz. My predecessor, however, was very much into control. So I have been

but the progress so far has been encouraging. Litton only wishes that more American critics acknowledged the success story. "The press here has fostered such pessimism about classical music. When you read in *The New York Times*, on five consecutive Sundays, articles about how the death knell has sounded for symphony orchestras, you feel like shouting: 'Hey, tell the readers the good news too!' In Dallas, we're winning. But, nobody ever mentions that."

The Dallas Symphony performs Roy Harris, Samuel Barber and Tchaikovsky at the Proms on Sunday at 7.30pm (Albert Hall, 0171-589 8212; also broadcast live on BBC2 and Radio 3). It then visits Waterfront Hall, Belfast, (Aug 31), National Concert Hall, Dublin (Sept 1) and Symphony Hall, Birmingham (Sept 3).

A Russian bear fight

BBC PROMS

TCHAIKOVSKY said of Glinsk's *Karaminskaya*, which opened this Prom, that it was the acorn from which the whole Russian symphonic school grew. It is an extraordinarily condensed premonition: the elision of two folk tunes repeated across different dazzling orchestrations culminating in persistent ostinati that would find their most thrilling echo in Stravinsky's *Rite*. In Tchaikovsky's own First Piano Concerto,

which followed, we hear Glinsk again, not just in the tripping Ukrainian folk tune but in the surging melancholy. Glinsk brought such "Russia" firmly into the European tradition. But when it comes to bringing Russianness out in a performance, Osmo Vänskä and the BBC

orchestra paled beside him. Vänskä seemed curiously intent on refining his reading, with self-conscious pianissimos verging on the timorous. The result was that Sokolov, whose own palette is richly orchestral, almost drowned them out. Sokolov is a mature artist with a fearsome energy

to unleash; and by the finale he seemed to have become impatient with the orchestra, and hurled towards the end with increasing petulance.

Vänskä's sense of restraint was channelled to better effect in Shostakovich's First Symphony. The first movement, if slack, can sound like a comic steeplechase, but Vänskä's tight grip gave it urgency.

As devolution looms, it was an opportune moment to dwell on the impassioned words of the Pict Calgacus against the Imperial Romans, subject of Edward McGuire's *Calgacus*. His eloquent speech is here transformed into a rousing bagpipe melody, played by Robert Wallace as he strode down the stalls steps. For this climactic moment, strings provided a drone and drums a dramatic commentary. This is a piece of great originality which has not dated in 20 years.

As devolution looms, it was an opportune moment to dwell on the impassioned words of the Pict Calgacus against the Imperial Romans, subject of Edward McGuire's *Calgacus*. His eloquent speech is here transformed into a rousing bagpipe melody, played by Robert Wallace as he strode down the stalls steps. For this climactic moment, strings provided a drone and drums a dramatic commentary. This is a piece of great originality which has not dated in 20 years.

But ticket sales are only the half of it. Private and corporate giving on a truly Texan scale brings the orchestra a further \$6 million a year.

Social events run by a committee of rich ladies add \$1 million annually.

That level of fundraising has enabled the orchestra to take a bold step: rather than waiting for the culturally apathetic TV networks to broadcast orchestral concerts, the Dallas Symphony is financing

the Dallas Symphony performs Roy Harris, Samuel Barber and Tchaikovsky at the Proms on Sunday at 7.30pm (Albert Hall, 0171-589 8212; also broadcast live on BBC2 and Radio 3). It then visits Waterfront Hall, Belfast, (Aug 31), National Concert Hall, Dublin (Sept 1) and Symphony Hall, Birmingham (Sept 3).

Barry Millington welcomes the chamber music festival at Delft

MUSIC festivals proliferate in summer like poppies in a cornfield, and some may ask whether we really need a new one like Isabelle van Keulen's at Delft. In fact, this is a new type of festival that has sprung up in recent years – obvious models are Kuhmo in Finland, Gidon Kremer's Lockenhaus in Austria, and Leif Ove Andsnes's Risøf in Norway – precisely as an antidote to the international circus of Edinburgh, Salzburg and the rest.

Van Keulen has persuaded a group of friends – artists of the calibre of the Vogler Quartet, clarinettist Michael Collins, trumpeter Håkan Hardenberger, as well as Kremer and Andsnes themselves – to come to the historic city of Delft and play together for next to nothing. In return, they can investigate repertoire they might not elsewhere and they get a substantial receptive audience. The venue is the courtyard of the Prinsenhof Museum, specially converted with a steel and glass roof, and the acoustics are excellent, encouraging a quality of listening rate on the festival circuit.

This is all the more remarkable given the challenging nature of the programming. Stravinsky and the equally uncompromising Swedish composer Allan Pettersson – a rugged, powerful individualist – loomed large in this first year; there was also bracing percussion music from Xenakis and the Dutchman Sytze Smit, alongside works by Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Schubert.

Elsewhere, Michael Collins made several outstanding contributions and there were innumerable fresh, invigorating performances of more standard repertoire works too.

No highly paid arts consultant would have dreamt up such a recipe, but at a stroke Delft has established both an identity and an audience.

Highly impressive and all

profoundly encouraging.

Of the two world premieres, Smit's *Songs and Games* was the more worthwhile. Six percussionists, led by the excellent Peter Sadio, engaged in lyrical and lucid dialogue with a pro-active, solo violin (Van Keulen), the latter rhapsodising freely but constantly initiating new phases. A passage for vibraphone and marimba had an especially evocative quality, but it was Van Keulen's climactic stroke on the tam-tam that crystallised the theatrical impulse behind the work.

The other world premiere was by Mendelsohn – Vladimir Mendelsohn, that is a member of Van Keulen's Iso Quartet. The jocular title of 2

Caprices No 5 gives notice of a

black, heavy-handed humour in which an uneasy marriage of classical and modernist

harmony results in a pretentious muddle.

More rewarding was Hardenberger's collaboration with the poet Jacques Werup in *Homage to Life*, in which solo trumpet pieces by Takemitsu, Kagei and others were delivered with this player's incomparable mastery of sonority and technique.

Elsewhere, Michael Collins made

several outstanding contribu-

tions and there were innumer-

able fresh, invigorating

performances of more stan-

dard repertoire works too.

No highly paid arts consul-

tant would have dreamt up

such a recipe, but at a stroke

Delft has established both

an identity and an audience.

Highly impressive and all

profoundly encouraging.

GREAT BRITISH HOPES
Rising stars in the arts firmament

ASHA KAHILON

Age: 28

Profession: Actress

African summer: *My Native Land*, a new play by Rodney Clark set in British East Africa between 1936 and 1940, opens tomorrow at the Lyric Studio, Hammersmith, with Kahilon in the lead as Poppy, the 19-year-old daughter of a wealthy Indian businessman.

Synopsis: Poppy defies her

father's wishes by becoming

a schoolteacher and begin-

ning an inter-racial affair

with a working-class Eng-

lishman. "I think at that

age I was quite like Poppy –

very independent and with an idealistic view of the world."

Happy return: Appearing at the Lyric will bring extra

satisfaction because she has already spent hundreds of hours

there – working as a waitress to pay the rent during her final

year at LAMDA. "I would always look jealously at the actors

coming in and out of the Lyric, wonder what it was like for them as performers and wish it was me."

Background: Born in Punjab, she came to London with her

family at the age of six. "I didn't speak a word of English but was still young enough that learning a new language from scratch at school was not a problem."

First stage appearance: Durians Park Middle School, Southall. "A wonderful teacher called Peter Smith would get us to act out little scenes for his assembly talks. I was hooked."

Training: In her late teens, the student groups run by

Quoctors Theatre in Ealing were "the real doorway" to

acting. Unable to secure a maintenance grant for a drama

course she spent three years working to save money, first as a

clerk with Ealing council, then as a nanny.

Does race make a difference? "When I finally went to

LAMDA, I was the only Asian out of 32 students in my year.

That made me look around and think about what my position in this profession might be. My first job after graduating was in a production of *Macbeth* at the Tricycle Theatre which used colour-blind casting. That gave me confidence."

Short-term forecast: "There's a strong crop of Asian writers

emerging at the moment, people like Ayub Khan-Din, Parv

Bansali and Ravi Kapoor, which will mean more diverse

stage roles for Asian actors. Whatever the part or play, I just

want to be working. That's the best feeling."

DANIEL ROSENTHAL

Mondrian at the Tate

Mondrian: *Nature to Abstraction*

From the Haags Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

26 July – 30 November 1997

Advance tickets £6.80/£4

from First Call: 0171-420 0000

Sponsored by AT&T

Centenary summer programme

in association with THE TIMES

Tate Gallery

100

For too long Hollywood has ruled the science fiction roost. Now, Sheila Johnston reports, the old empire is striking back

Close encounters of the Euro kind

When Luc Besson's *The Fifth Element* opened at the Cannes Film Festival in May, the trade publication *Variety* described it as "a largely European attempt to make an American-style sci-fi spectacular". Critics on both sides of the Atlantic had the same view: since the blockbuster space operas of the 1970s, America has colonised the science fiction genre and won to anyone who dares to trespass. Weeks later, the success of *The Fifth Element* in America indicated that it could be time to think again. Europeans are venturing back into the galaxy.

This week sees the opening of *Event Horizon*, a slab of Gothic

horror in deep space from the British director Paul Anderson. The Spanish director Guillermo Del Toro will have his new horror-fantasy, *Mimic*, at the Venice Film Festival next month, while Gabriele Salvatores's *Nirvana* has been a commercial hit in its native Italy, launching a small crowd of local imitators.

The story of a video-game player (Christopher Lambert) struggling to escape his destiny, *Nirvana* is a dramatic departure for its director-producer team, Salvatores and Maurizio Totti: their most notable previous hit was *Mediterraneo*, a gentle comedy about a platoon of Italian soldiers on a Greek island during the Second World War, which won the Best Foreign Film Oscar in 1992.

Nirvana marks the first time that Totti has sold a film to America which was not a traditional arthouse film. "Audiences expect Italians to make comedies with big tits, tomatoes and mandolins," he says. "But why shouldn't we make science fiction? People aren't surprised that Martin Scorsese is making a film about the Buddha."

Observers agree that this new strain of European futurism differs sharply from the American. The fantasy writer Chris Fowler, two of whose novels are currently in pre-production, says: "There's a definite European sensibility emerging. It's a cinema of ideas."



Not very Spielberg: *Event Horizon*, which opens in Britain on Friday, is a Gothic horror film with Tarkovsky overtones which happens to be set on board a space ship

The makers of *Event Horizon* can back up that claim. Anderson says that one of the works he studied before shooting began was Andrei Tarkovsky's *Solaris* (1972), the quintessential European arthouse science-fiction movie. "In American films the characters come on screen with a wince and they're part of a team," Anderson says. "But there's a terrible loneliness about *Solaris*. Before the central character goes on his mission, we see him staring at a

puddle for what seems about 15 minutes. Then it begins to rain and he walks back to his house. At the beginning of *Event Horizon* you see the central character in his white pod, and he's just a sad, lonely man. For the first seven minutes, only one sentence is said: 'Care, God, I miss you.'

Also I think the darkness of the visual style is very European. The spaceship is based on the floorplan of Notre Dame Cathedral: it is cruciform, the thruster rockets are

towers from Notre Dame turned on their side and all the superstructure is based on the stained-glass windows, but rendered in iron and steel rather than glass and lead. There was a lot of religious imagery in the script and it set me thinking along those lines."

One reason for the new wave of sci-fi is the growing clout of the international market. In the past, American films earned most of their box office takings on their home turf. Today, as Jeremy Bolt,

the producer of *Event Horizon*, points out, "foreign earnings can be worth up to 70 per cent of our profits. That's why Hollywood executives are saying, 'We must make sure we appeal in foreign markets, therefore perhaps we need foreign sensibilities.'

Smart wonder, then, that studios

and independent mini-majors such as Miramax are scouring Europe for talent; like other writers, Fowler notes "a definite sense of the market being tattered". *Event Horizon* was

battle the scum of the universe in films such as *Mars Attacks!*, *Independence Day* and *Men in Black*. They're here, they're bad, let's have lots of explosions," as the critic Nigel Floyd puts it. "It's all just flag-waving nonsense."

Significantly, the only recent big-budget American movie to depart from this principle has been *Contact*, a philosophical, non-action orientated piece in which Jodie Foster makes contact with friendly extraterrestrials. Opening in America opposite *Men in Black*, it drew mixed reviews and looks likely to do vastly inferior business. But we may love it this side of the pond.

Euro sci-fi might have no desire to ape Hollywood-style action-ad

I think
the darkness
of the
visual style
is very
European

venture, but it probably also has no option. We have the technical resources to produce sophisticated special effects, but rarely the budgets. "Old-style sci-fi used relatively inexpensive physical effects, with models," says Floyd. "Today most of them are digital, which means a lot of money. Industrial Light and Magic, George Lucas's post-production house, claims that it is second only to NASA in terms of computer power."

People here have been trying to film J.G. Ballard's *High Rise* for years. Who's going to put up that kind of money? On the other hand, it could be exactly this which enables Euro sci-fi to avoid the trap of American event movies, where as Hollywood screenwriters have been increasingly complaining — story and character often lose out to spectacular effects.

But the jury remains out on the existence of a genuine long-term revival. To date, *Nirvana* has not attracted a British distributor. And advance reaction suggests that mixed reviews await *Event Horizon*, although the film-makers remain bullish. And in any case, does it matter what the critics say? When the same *Variety* critic who trashed *The Fifth Element* hammered Anderson's first film, *Shopping*, as "a reckless orgy of destruction", they merely splashed the quote proudly over the poster.

He had a special flair for big dramatic works, but we must not forget that he made many subtle and original shorter works, among them his delicate Debussy suite *Brouillards*, the best of all stagings of Stravinsky's *Jeu de cartes*, and *Poème de l'exsile* for Margot Fonteyn, giving her, at 51, the chance for the first time to play a fully mature woman, instead of the usual run of ballerina "young girls".

But Cranko never confined his interest to his own choreography. He gave MacMillan opportunities to create works, including his masterpiece *Song of the Earth*, after Covent Garden had vetoed it. It was Cranko, in fact, who had first nudged MacMillan towards trying choreography, and a whole generation of new ballet-makers grew up in his Stuttgart company, the most notable being Jiri Kylian and John Neumeier. "Just to be in that creative atmosphere was exciting," Kylian said. "John gave people chances and made them grow."

Similarly, he had a tremendous gift for spotting potential in a dancer and bringing it out. Famously, he found his muse, Marcia Haydée, when she applied for a corps de ballet vacancy, and persuaded the management to give her a contract as a ballerina. She and the two unknown young men who became her regular partners, Egon Madson and Richard Cragun, grew into great dancers under Cranko's inspiration.

So just consider what Cranko might have done for the Royal Ballet. Heaven knows it could do with some of his boldness in lateral thinking to overcome — or, better, to have prevented — the plight in which it now finds itself.

Traveller with a roving eye

THEATRE

The revised version of Michael Pennington's celebrated one-man show appears on a sorrowful day for the Peter Hall Company. Ed and David Mirvish, Canadian producers and owners of the Old Vic, have announced that the building is to be sold in December.

This is a sad curtain call of a project that Hall hoped might last five years, a revival of the repertory system he has always believed works best for actors, playing seven days a week. I have no figures for the season as a whole, but when I saw *Waiting for Godot* two weeks ago the house was packed. Pennington manages to make a coded reference to Beckett's play in the course of his performance, which is quite an achievement when the man he is portraying died two years before Beckett was born.

This biographical entertainment was first seen at the National Theatre in 1984, since when more details of Chekhov's life have surfaced, the oil-slick of Soviet censorship fades away.

These revelations chiefly show the man's fondness for women, fat or thin, Russian or foreign, and must have been suppressed because censors always believe that the only hero is a sexless hero. A daydream of settling in The Netherlands with a Dutch woman and a cow is particularly endearing.

Pennington walks into view from the darkness at the rear of the stage, supporting himself on a knobby black cane, trimly bearded, pince-nez

Baden-Powell, where he was to die. His memories roam around his harsh childhood, early years as doctor and hack writer, and the astonishing journey across Siberia in 1890.

Presenting the hallucinations in his story *The Black Monk* as being the dying Chekhov's own experience is effective, but so is Pennington's manner throughout, his light voice caressing us with precise, vivid descriptions, so courteously spoken, and

JEREMY KINGSTON

Where all is for the worst

THEATRE

THE first mistake that Alan Ayckbourn's characters make is being born. Parents are a disaster and so, the whole, is the world. The second mistake is exercising free will, for it regularly lands Ayckbourn's characters in relationships. Often they get married, which is a still graver error, for "whoever you decide to share your life with invariably turns out to be the worst possible choice".

The speaker is Robert McBain's grumpy, old Edward Gray, who may be trying to kill his wife by tampering with her gas stove and electric blanket. In turn, Auriol Smith's placid, reprobable Emma may be slipping bits of broken glass into his sandwiches. But it is their three daughters who are the main focus of Ayckbourn's comic pessimism. Suppose they had formed different attachments. Would those still be the "worst possible choices"?

The play dates from 1970, had its first London showing at the Orange Tree in 1978, was revived there last December, and undeniably merits a summer outing. It is not top-notch Ayckbourn, not *Absurd Person Singular*, not *Just Between Ourselves*. But if we hadn't been spoilt by those pieces, we would surely regard it as a remarkable blend

of technical bravura and funny-gum observation.

Joanne Mitchell's Jenny is always pregnant and harried. Prue Clarke's Polly, childless and always angry, gives Oliver the hardest time. Emma Gregory's Deirdre gets spectacularly drunk when she is married to David.

The problem with the play remains its last scene, which occurs the morning after an offstage celebration that apparently ended with horrified fellow-diners watching the family like gawpers at the monkey-house. This is a free-for-all in which relationships and (hence) personalities change with baffling, too baffling, frequency. But at least there is no missing the final point: "If they can just keep working at their marriages," says Mother wishfully. "Disastrous," grunts Father. And Father knows best.

BENEDICT
NIGHTINGALE

of technical bravura and funny-gum observation.

Family Circle puts Edward's dictum to the test. Aggressive Polly, fussy Jenny and subversive Deirdre turn up for their parents' predictably miserable wedding anniversary, their three men in tow, but as scene succeeds scene, Oliver, David and James change partners until each has run an entire gamut of Gray sisters. And by the end it is difficult to say which is the least worst pairing.

The play dates from 1970, had its first London showing at the Orange Tree in 1978, was revived there last December, and undeniably merits a summer outing. It is not top-notch Ayckbourn, not *Absurd Person Singular*, not *Just Between Ourselves*. But if we hadn't been spoilt by those pieces, we would surely regard it as a remarkable blend

A young Prince becomes King and a great adventure begins...

Henry V

by William Shakespeare



Just suppose that in 1970 the folk running the Covent Garden Opera House had not gone to Berlin for the new artistic director of the Royal Ballet, but to Stuttgart. What a difference that might have made to the history of British ballet.

Kenneth MacMillan, who held the equivalent post at the Deutsche Oper, Berlin, was the one who got the job. The man running the more famous company in Stuttgart was a Royal Ballet emigre, John Cranko. Both were to die young, a fate they might have avoided had Cranko got the nod. He was to die on a flight back from New York after his company's triumphant visit there in 1973, at the age of 46. MacMillan, with a less stressful life, might have been at Cranko's 70th birthday party this month, instead of suffering a fatal heart attack in 1992.

That way, we would have kept two of the most remarkable talents to have emerged from the postwar Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. Cranko was the first to prove himself. Born in South Africa, he created four ballets in Cape Town before taking the first available ship to London in 1946, aged 18. He was never much of a dancer, but Ninette de Valois took him into the companies at the Wells and at Covent Garden because of his creative ability.

Straight away he began making ballets for both the theatres, and by the time he was 23 Cranko had been appointed resident choreographer at Sadler's Wells and had made a work for New York City Ballet. During 15 years in England he staged 34 ballets including such hits as *Beauty and the Beast*, *Pineapple Poll*, *The Lady and the Fool* and *Romeo*

and *Juliet*. He persuaded Benjamin Britten and John Piper to collaborate with him in mounting the first three-act ballet with British music, choreography and design, *The Prince of the Pagodas*. He directed opera, formed his own small company for a summer season — and still found time to write and direct a long-running revue, *Cranks*.

Even with that track record, Cranko felt himself frustrated for lack of work, and in 1961 accepted an invitation to direct the baller in Stuttgart. It had been a minor although respectable troupe in a theatre dominated by opera. Over the next eight years Cranko built up both the repertoire and the dancers to the point that when the Stuttgart Ballet gave its first New York season at the Metropolitan Opera House, it enjoyed what *The New York Times* critic Clive Barnes described as "a great, roaring success".

Cranko's "ballet miracle", as it was dubbed by the German press, produced some of the best ballets of his time.

Cranko's "ballet miracle", as it was dubbed by the German press, produced some of the best ballets of his time. Similarly, he had a tremendous gift for spotting potential in a dancer and bringing it out. Famously, he found his muse, Marcia Haydée, when she applied for a corps de ballet vacancy, and persuaded the management to give her a contract as a ballerina. She and the two unknown young men who became her regular partners, Egon Madson and Richard Cragun, grew into great dancers under Cranko's inspiration.

So just consider what Cranko might have done for the Royal Ballet. Heaven knows it could do with some of his boldness in lateral thinking to overcome — or, better, to have prevented — the plight in which it now finds itself.

The newly famous John Cranko at home in the late 1950s

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON 5-27 Sept
Royal Shakespeare Theatre
01789 295623

LONDON 4-22 Nov
Barbican Theatre
0171 638 8891

UK TOUR
Manchester 30 Sept-4 Oct
Palace Theatre
0161 242 2503

Canterbury 14-18 Oct
Marlowe Theatre
01227 787 787

Norwich 21-25 Oct
Theatre Royal
01603 630 000
(postal/box booking opens 1 September)

Bradford 28 Oct-1 Nov
Alhambra
01274 752000

Glasgow 25-29 Nov
Theatre Royal
0141 332 9000

Beth 2-6 Dec
Theatre Royal
01225 448844
(postal booking opens 18 September)

Woking 9-13 Dec
New Victoria Theatre
01483 761144

RSC
ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

EDINBURGH
Scottish Opera presents the original 1912 version of Strauss's opera, *Arfida und Mezen*, which was first performed at the Festival in 1950. With Anne Evans in the title role, John Horton Murray as Bacchus and Lee Salter as Zerbinetta. Sung in German with English subtitles. Tickets £10-£12.50. Sat 7.30pm, Sun 7.30pm.

In the Queen's Hall, at 2.15pm, there is an opportunity to listen to a superb recording of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's performance of conductor Sir William Walton's *Parade* and his *Cello Concerto* (soloist Pierre Fournier), at the 1959 Edinburgh Festival.

At 8pm in the Usher Hall, the on-stage violinist Bryan Terfel performs a programme of songs by Schumann and Fazl, accompanied by Malcolm Martineau on the piano. Festival box office (0131-732 2000).

Fringe events include Keith Kenner's *Three Pots of Turnip*, a series of extracts, songs and incised tales of the Caledonian Ballad (Venue 36, 6.30pm, until August 29).

Tinderbox performs all the Jaffa Coke (Venue 7, 8pm, as part of the New Music festival). The Edinburgh Opera Group performs *Lamox* (Berkeley's *Skyline*, A Divorce Engagement), at Moray House (Venue 107, 7.30pm, Sat 8pm, Sun 8.30pm, Sat 8pm). Another Theatre Company presents *Suzi Glower's* *Hunting the Seal Wife*, and *Chamallow Theatre* Company presents *7500 Miles* (at the Queen's Hall, 2.15pm, Wednesday at Diversions Attraction (Venue 11, 4.45pm).

Over in the Famous Grouse House (Venue 14, 10.30pm), *Chief Duty* plays out the tale of *Death in a Life* and *Death in Million Keynes*.

Fringe box office (0131-226 5138, ticket 0131-226 2587 (information).

EDINBURGH
BBC PROMS: Osmo Vänskä conducts the Halleford University Male Chorus and the BBC Scottish Symphony

TODAY'S CHOICE
A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian MacKay

IN A CHURCH Orchestra in an all-Schubert programme. The concert begins with the London premiere of *The Wood Nymph*, followed by a special aria, after the interval, by soprano Karen Alberth Hall, Kensington Gore, SW1 (0171-589 8212). Tonight, 7.30pm (5).

MACBETH — STAGE OF BLOOD Sunset performance by seven actors from Manipur, North East India, by the side of the Thame. Uses dramatic interpretation and music to tell the story of Waterman, High Street, Bradford (0181-588 1178). Tonight-Sun, 8pm.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY Lucy Bailey directs Nicholas le Prevost as the wicked

duchess of the Caledonian Ballad (Venue 36, 6.30pm, until August 29).

Tinderbox performs all the Jaffa Coke (Venue 7, 8pm, as part of the New Music festival). The Edinburgh Opera Group performs *Lamox* (Berkeley's *Skyline*, A Divorce Engagement), at Moray House (Venue 107, 7.30pm, Sat 8pm, Sun 8.30pm, Sat 8pm). Another Theatre Company presents *Suzi Glower's* *Hunting the Seal Wife*, and *Chamallow Theatre* Company presents *7500 Miles* (at the Queen's Hall, 2.15pm, Wednesday at Diversions Attraction (Venue 11, 4.45pm).

Over in the Famous Grouse House (Venue 14, 10.30pm), *Chief Duty* plays out the tale of *Death in a Life* and *Death in Million Keynes*.

Fringe box office (0131-226 5138, ticket 0131-226 2587 (information).

EDINBURGH
BBC PROMS: Osmo Vänskä conducts the Halleford University Male Chorus and the BBC Scottish Symphony

EDINBURGH
Osmo Vänskä conducts Sibelius at the Proms

THEATRE GUIDE
Jersey Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Seats still available

Seats of all prices

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm, Until October 4.

LIFE SUPPORT Alan Bates subby moving in to play about his son's terminal illness. Alldays, The Alwyth, WC2 (0171-416 0003) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Wed, 7.30pm, Until 2.30pm.

THE WOOD DEMON Good actors in generally disappointing revival of Graham Vickery's *Wood of Vanja*. Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (0171-639 4401), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.

LONG RUNNERS

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

WATERSHIP DOWN New Shakespeare Company's youth theatre assembled for *Watership Down* (for Julian's birthday) at *Watership Down* (for Julian's birthday) at the Royal Court, Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-369 2629) Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs and Sat, 4pm.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jersey Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Seats still available

Seats of all prices

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Wed and Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

LIFE SUPPORT Alan Bates subby moving in to play about his son's terminal illness. Alldays, The Alwyth, WC2 (0171-416 0003) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Wed, 7.30pm, Until 2.30pm.

THE WOOD DEMON Good actors in generally disappointing revival of Graham Vickery's *Wood of Vanja*. Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (0171-639 4401), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.

LONG RUNNERS

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

WATERSHIP DOWN New Shakespeare Company's youth theatre assembled for *Watership Down* (for Julian's birthday) at the Royal Court, Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-369 2629) Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs and Sat, 4pm.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jersey Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Seats still available

Seats of all prices

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

LIFE SUPPORT Alan Bates subby moving in to play about his son's terminal illness. Alldays, The Alwyth, WC2 (0171-416 0003) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Wed, 7.30pm, Until 2.30pm.

THE WOOD DEMON Good actors in generally disappointing revival of Graham Vickery's *Wood of Vanja*. Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (0171-639 4401), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.

LONG RUNNERS

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

WATERSHIP DOWN New Shakespeare Company's youth theatre assembled for *Watership Down* (for Julian's birthday) at the Royal Court, Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-369 2629) Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs and Sat, 4pm.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jersey Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Seats still available

Seats of all prices

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

LIFE SUPPORT Alan Bates subby moving in to play about his son's terminal illness. Alldays, The Alwyth, WC2 (0171-416 0003) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Wed, 7.30pm, Until 2.30pm.

THE WOOD DEMON Good actors in generally disappointing revival of Graham Vickery's *Wood of Vanja*. Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (0171-639 4401), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.

LONG RUNNERS

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

WATERSHIP DOWN New Shakespeare Company's youth theatre assembled for *Watership Down* (for Julian's birthday) at the Royal Court, Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-369 2629) Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs and Sat, 4pm.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jersey Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Seats still available

Seats of all prices

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

LIFE SUPPORT Alan Bates subby moving in to play about his son's terminal illness. Alldays, The Alwyth, WC2 (0171-416 0003) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Wed, 7.30pm, Until 2.30pm.

THE WOOD DEMON Good actors in generally disappointing revival of Graham Vickery's *Wood of Vanja*. Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (0171-639 4401), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.

LONG RUNNERS

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

WATERSHIP DOWN New Shakespeare Company's youth theatre assembled for *Watership Down* (for Julian's birthday) at the Royal Court, Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-369 2629) Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs and Sat, 4pm.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jersey Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Seats still available

Seats of all prices

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

LIFE SUPPORT Alan Bates subby moving in to play about his son's terminal illness. Alldays, The Alwyth, WC2 (0171-416 0003) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Wed, 7.30pm, Until 2.30pm.

THE WOOD DEMON Good actors in generally disappointing revival of Graham Vickery's *Wood of Vanja*. Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (0171-639 4401), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.

LONG RUNNERS

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

WATERSHIP DOWN New Shakespeare Company's youth theatre assembled for *Watership Down* (for Julian's birthday) at the Royal Court, Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-369 2629) Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs and Sat, 4pm.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jersey Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Seats still available

Seats of all prices

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

LIFE SUPPORT Alan Bates subby moving in to play about his son's terminal illness. Alldays, The Alwyth, WC2 (0171-416 0003) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Wed, 7.30pm, Until 2.30pm.

THE WOOD DEMON Good actors in generally disappointing revival of Graham Vickery's *Wood of Vanja*. Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (0171-639 4401), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.

LONG RUNNERS

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

WATERSHIP DOWN New Shakespeare Company's youth theatre assembled for *Watership Down* (for Julian's birthday) at the Royal Court, Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-369 2629) Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs and Sat, 4pm.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jersey Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Seats still available

Seats of all prices

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

LIFE SUPPORT Alan Bates subby moving in to play about his son's terminal illness. Alldays, The Alwyth, WC2 (0171-416 0003) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Wed, 7.30pm, Until 2.30pm.

THE WOOD DEMON Good actors in generally disappointing revival of Graham Vickery's *Wood of Vanja*. Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (0171-639 4401), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.

LONG RUNNERS

(0171-974 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm Until October 4.

WATERSHIP DOWN New Shakespeare Company's youth theatre assembled for *Watership Down* (for Julian's birthday) at the Royal Court, Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-369 2629) Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs and Sat, 4pm.

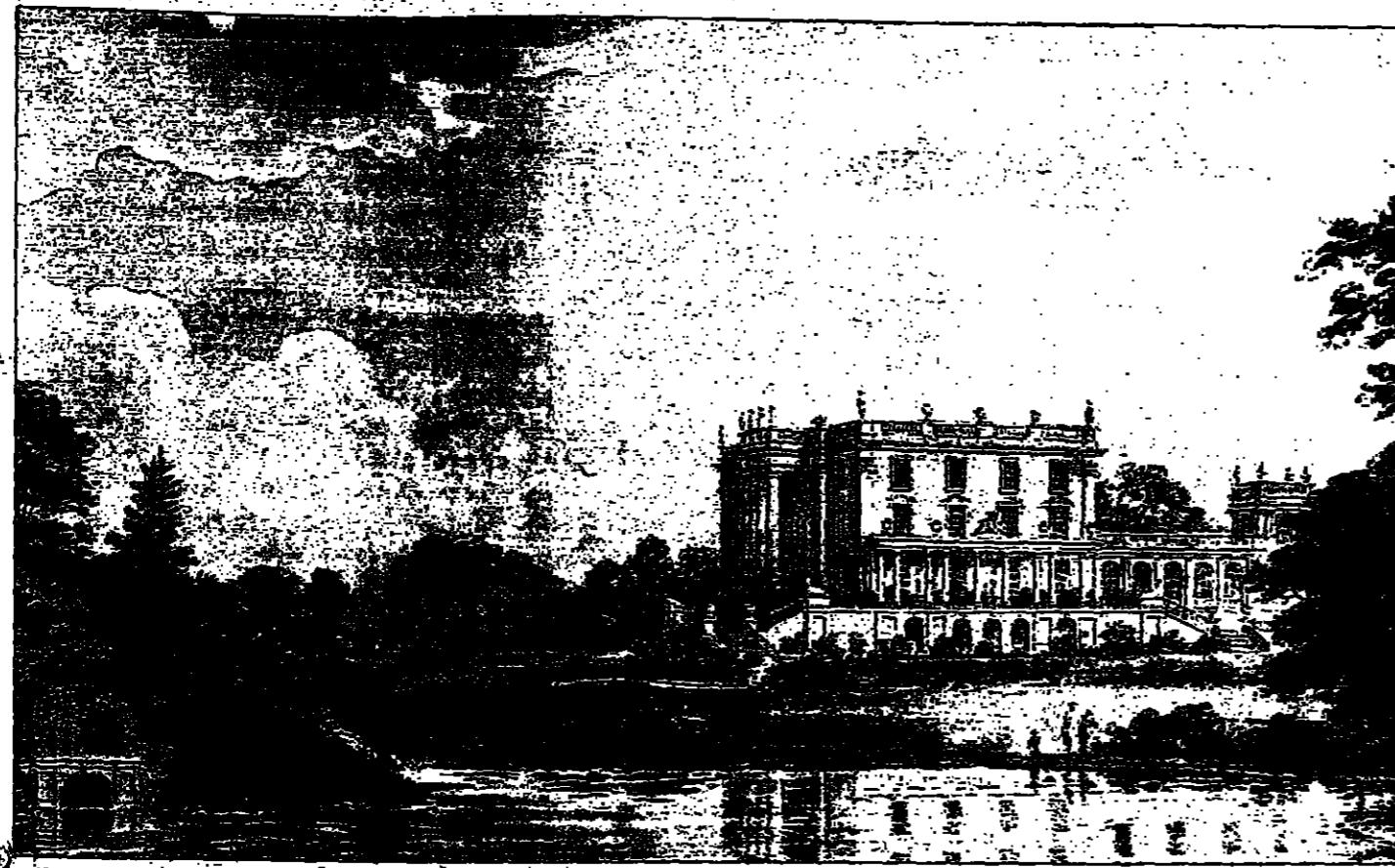
THEATRE GUIDE

Jersey Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Abbeys and lodges are all the rage with those seeking period apartments. One can even find shelter in an asylum

Winged houses take off



The Grade I listed Stoneleigh Abbey, which dates back to the 12th century, has been restored by the conversion guru Kit Martin

Large period country houses around the country are being converted into wings, or large apartments and buyers unable to find country houses as their main residence or weekend bolthole are being drawn to such schemes. Many of these houses have fallen into disrepair, or have become too big to be considered a single residence.

In Lange of Hembury in Devon, there is a real market for wings and country-house apartments. People like the idea of living in a grand

Stephen Briegel of Allen Briegel in Putney, southwest London, agrees.

"Developers used to have problems finding the right types of property and selling the concept," he explains. "But this no longer the case, and leading housebuilders such as Try Homes and Berkeley Homes are moving into this market

rooms. There is often a bit of history attached, as well as access to beautiful grounds and gardens."

One such scheme is the conversion of Grade I listed Stoneleigh Abbey, which dates from the 12th century, by Kit Martin, something of a restoration and conversion guru. The abbey fell into ruin during the dissolution of the monasteries in the 16th century, and rebuilt to form an Elizabethan house by the then Lord Leigh in 1561. The Leigh family lived in the house until 1994 and the Abbey was the childhood home of Jane Austen's mother.

The 18th-century west wing and the Grade II listed Repton parkland will be restored by the newly formed Stoneleigh Abbey Preservation Trust and opened to the public. Meanwhile, the south, east and laundry wings are being turned into private homes.

Knight Frank (01789 297735) is offering six houses in the first phase, with two from the east wing. One, the Jacobean House, is going for £25,000. It has a dining room lined with 17th-century leather wall hangings and a Jacobean staircase.

Many other schemes are afoot, each with its own unique features and often involving much sympathetic restoration. Grade II listed Great Bowden Hall, near Market Harborough, has been restored and transformed into seven apartments by Enterprise Heritage, after a fire and years of neglect. Prices start from £10,000. Contact Savills (01780 766222).

Maristow, a Grade II listed 18th-century house near Plymouth, is another Kit Martin project, with the main house divided into six houses. Knight Frank (01392 423111) is handling the sales. Similarly, Grade II listed Georgian Wideworthy Court, built by G.S. Repton in 1830, has been converted into 14

A portion of a country house offers the things that appeal to people: high ceilings, history'

to meet the incredible demand for this type of property. This is fuelled by eager London buyers and those looking to "maintain and secure second homes, or downsizing."

"A portion of a country house or a converted apartment offers all the things that appeal to people: high ceilings and well-proportioned

apartments, from about £70,000. John D Wood (01962 863131) and John-Stops & Staff (01823 325144).

Berkeley Homes (01268 814314) is converting Leyden Park, in East Meon, Hampshire, to four wings, as well as adding some buildings in the grounds and converting stables

into mews-style properties. The Twenties house, which belonged to Lord and Lady Peel, boasts a listed double helix staircase and formal knot garden, recently restored by Berkeley Homes.

Grade II listed Burford Lodge, near Dorking, once home to the Barclay family, is another Berkeley scheme (01932 576500). It, too, will have new buildings, while the lodge itself, built in 1786 and nestling against Box Hill, has been transformed into eight apartments, from £239,950 to £325,000.

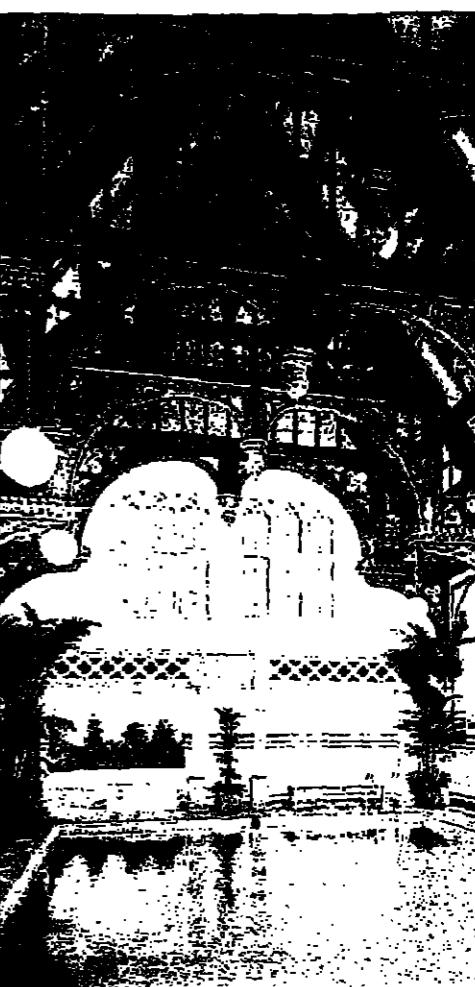
Residents of Crossland House at Virginia Water in Surrey will be able to live in "houses" as opposed to the more usual "apartments". Octagon, the building company behind the redevelopment of the property, a Grade I listed Victorian Gothic building, hopes to complete work in the main hall of the building by Christmas.

Crossland House was the centrepiece of the Holloway Sanatorium and was the creation of Thomas Holloway and his architect, William Crossland. In September 1871, Holloway declared that he intended building an asylum for 200 paying patients. When the building was opened in 1885 by the Prince and Princess of Wales, it had cost the equivalent of about £10 million.

Octagon has restored the building from a derelict state and this has allowed it to build interiors from the ground up. As well as the houses that remain in the west wing of the main building, there are a further 190 new houses and apartments on the 24-acre estate.

All residents will have access to the leisure complex, which includes a multi-purpose hall, tennis court and gym. A swimming pool is housed in what was the library, under a vaulted roof almost restored to its original splendour. Muted tones, rather than the bright colours favoured by the Victorians, were used. Each property will have spaces for two or three cars.

KATHERINE BERGEN



Crossland's dining room now houses the pool

TO ADVERTISE CALL:
0171 481 1986 (TRADE)
0171 481 4000 (PRIVATE)

NOTH OF THE THAMES

RAMSEY New Co. New houses, 2 bed, 3 bed, 4 bed, 5 bed, 6 bed, 7 bed, 8 bed, 9 bed, 10 bed, 11 bed, 12 bed, 13 bed, 14 bed, 15 bed, 16 bed, 17 bed, 18 bed, 19 bed, 20 bed, 21 bed, 22 bed, 23 bed, 24 bed, 25 bed, 26 bed, 27 bed, 28 bed, 29 bed, 30 bed, 31 bed, 32 bed, 33 bed, 34 bed, 35 bed, 36 bed, 37 bed, 38 bed, 39 bed, 40 bed, 41 bed, 42 bed, 43 bed, 44 bed, 45 bed, 46 bed, 47 bed, 48 bed, 49 bed, 50 bed, 51 bed, 52 bed, 53 bed, 54 bed, 55 bed, 56 bed, 57 bed, 58 bed, 59 bed, 60 bed, 61 bed, 62 bed, 63 bed, 64 bed, 65 bed, 66 bed, 67 bed, 68 bed, 69 bed, 70 bed, 71 bed, 72 bed, 73 bed, 74 bed, 75 bed, 76 bed, 77 bed, 78 bed, 79 bed, 80 bed, 81 bed, 82 bed, 83 bed, 84 bed, 85 bed, 86 bed, 87 bed, 88 bed, 89 bed, 90 bed, 91 bed, 92 bed, 93 bed, 94 bed, 95 bed, 96 bed, 97 bed, 98 bed, 99 bed, 100 bed, 101 bed, 102 bed, 103 bed, 104 bed, 105 bed, 106 bed, 107 bed, 108 bed, 109 bed, 110 bed, 111 bed, 112 bed, 113 bed, 114 bed, 115 bed, 116 bed, 117 bed, 118 bed, 119 bed, 120 bed, 121 bed, 122 bed, 123 bed, 124 bed, 125 bed, 126 bed, 127 bed, 128 bed, 129 bed, 130 bed, 131 bed, 132 bed, 133 bed, 134 bed, 135 bed, 136 bed, 137 bed, 138 bed, 139 bed, 140 bed, 141 bed, 142 bed, 143 bed, 144 bed, 145 bed, 146 bed, 147 bed, 148 bed, 149 bed, 150 bed, 151 bed, 152 bed, 153 bed, 154 bed, 155 bed, 156 bed, 157 bed, 158 bed, 159 bed, 160 bed, 161 bed, 162 bed, 163 bed, 164 bed, 165 bed, 166 bed, 167 bed, 168 bed, 169 bed, 170 bed, 171 bed, 172 bed, 173 bed, 174 bed, 175 bed, 176 bed, 177 bed, 178 bed, 179 bed, 180 bed, 181 bed, 182 bed, 183 bed, 184 bed, 185 bed, 186 bed, 187 bed, 188 bed, 189 bed, 190 bed, 191 bed, 192 bed, 193 bed, 194 bed, 195 bed, 196 bed, 197 bed, 198 bed, 199 bed, 200 bed, 201 bed, 202 bed, 203 bed, 204 bed, 205 bed, 206 bed, 207 bed, 208 bed, 209 bed, 210 bed, 211 bed, 212 bed, 213 bed, 214 bed, 215 bed, 216 bed, 217 bed, 218 bed, 219 bed, 220 bed, 221 bed, 222 bed, 223 bed, 224 bed, 225 bed, 226 bed, 227 bed, 228 bed, 229 bed, 230 bed, 231 bed, 232 bed, 233 bed, 234 bed, 235 bed, 236 bed, 237 bed, 238 bed, 239 bed, 240 bed, 241 bed, 242 bed, 243 bed, 244 bed, 245 bed, 246 bed, 247 bed, 248 bed, 249 bed, 250 bed, 251 bed, 252 bed, 253 bed, 254 bed, 255 bed, 256 bed, 257 bed, 258 bed, 259 bed, 260 bed, 261 bed, 262 bed, 263 bed, 264 bed, 265 bed, 266 bed, 267 bed, 268 bed, 269 bed, 270 bed, 271 bed, 272 bed, 273 bed, 274 bed, 275 bed, 276 bed, 277 bed, 278 bed, 279 bed, 280 bed, 281 bed, 282 bed, 283 bed, 284 bed, 285 bed, 286 bed, 287 bed, 288 bed, 289 bed, 290 bed, 291 bed, 292 bed, 293 bed, 294 bed, 295 bed, 296 bed, 297 bed, 298 bed, 299 bed, 300 bed, 301 bed, 302 bed, 303 bed, 304 bed, 305 bed, 306 bed, 307 bed, 308 bed, 309 bed, 310 bed, 311 bed, 312 bed, 313 bed, 314 bed, 315 bed, 316 bed, 317 bed, 318 bed, 319 bed, 320 bed, 321 bed, 322 bed, 323 bed, 324 bed, 325 bed, 326 bed, 327 bed, 328 bed, 329 bed, 330 bed, 331 bed, 332 bed, 333 bed, 334 bed, 335 bed, 336 bed, 337 bed, 338 bed, 339 bed, 340 bed, 341 bed, 342 bed, 343 bed, 344 bed, 345 bed, 346 bed, 347 bed, 348 bed, 349 bed, 350 bed, 351 bed, 352 bed, 353 bed, 354 bed, 355 bed, 356 bed, 357 bed, 358 bed, 359 bed, 360 bed, 361 bed, 362 bed, 363 bed, 364 bed, 365 bed, 366 bed, 367 bed, 368 bed, 369 bed, 370 bed, 371 bed, 372 bed, 373 bed, 374 bed, 375 bed, 376 bed, 377 bed, 378 bed, 379 bed, 380 bed, 381 bed, 382 bed, 383 bed, 384 bed, 385 bed, 386 bed, 387 bed, 388 bed, 389 bed, 390 bed, 391 bed, 392 bed, 393 bed, 394 bed, 395 bed, 396 bed, 397 bed, 398 bed, 399 bed, 400 bed, 401 bed, 402 bed, 403 bed, 404 bed, 405 bed, 406 bed, 407 bed, 408 bed, 409 bed, 410 bed, 411 bed, 412 bed, 413 bed, 414 bed, 415 bed, 416 bed, 417 bed, 418 bed, 419 bed, 420 bed, 421 bed, 422 bed, 423 bed, 424 bed, 425 bed, 426 bed, 427 bed, 428 bed, 429 bed, 430 bed, 431 bed, 432 bed, 433 bed, 434 bed, 435 bed, 436 bed, 437 bed, 438 bed, 439 bed, 440 bed, 441 bed, 442 bed, 443 bed, 444 bed, 445 bed, 446 bed, 447 bed, 448 bed, 449 bed, 450 bed, 451 bed, 452 bed, 453 bed, 454 bed, 455 bed, 456 bed, 457 bed, 458 bed, 459 bed, 460 bed, 461 bed, 462 bed, 463 bed, 464 bed, 465 bed, 466 bed, 467 bed, 468 bed, 469 bed, 470 bed, 471 bed, 472 bed, 473 bed, 474 bed, 475 bed, 476 bed, 477 bed, 478 bed, 479 bed, 480 bed, 481 bed, 482 bed, 483 bed, 484 bed, 485 bed, 486 bed, 487 bed, 488 bed, 489 bed, 490 bed, 491 bed, 492 bed, 493 bed, 494 bed, 495 bed, 496 bed, 497 bed, 498 bed, 499 bed, 500 bed, 501 bed, 502 bed, 503 bed, 504 bed, 505 bed, 506 bed, 507 bed, 508 bed, 509 bed, 510 bed, 511 bed, 512 bed, 513 bed, 514 bed, 515 bed, 516 bed, 517 bed, 518 bed, 519 bed, 520 bed, 521 bed, 522 bed, 523 bed, 524 bed, 525 bed, 526 bed, 527 bed, 528 bed, 529 bed, 530 bed, 531 bed, 532 bed, 533 bed, 534 bed, 535 bed, 536 bed, 537 bed, 538 bed, 539 bed, 540 bed, 541 bed, 542 bed, 543 bed, 544 bed, 545 bed, 546 bed, 547 bed, 548 bed, 549 bed, 550 bed, 551 bed, 552 bed, 553 bed, 554 bed, 555 bed, 556 bed, 557 bed, 558 bed, 559 bed, 560 bed, 561 bed, 562 bed, 563 bed, 564 bed, 565 bed, 566 bed, 567 bed, 568 bed, 569 bed, 570 bed, 571 bed, 572 bed, 573 bed, 574 bed, 575 bed, 576 bed, 577 bed, 578 bed, 579 bed, 580 bed, 581 bed, 582 bed, 583 bed, 584 bed, 585 bed, 586 bed, 587 bed, 588 bed, 589 bed, 590 bed, 591 bed, 592 bed, 593 bed, 594 bed, 595 bed, 596 bed, 597 bed, 598 bed, 599 bed, 600 bed, 601 bed, 602 bed, 603 bed, 604 bed, 605 bed, 606 bed, 607 bed, 608 bed, 609 bed, 610 bed, 611 bed, 612 bed, 613 bed, 614 bed, 615 bed, 616 bed, 617 bed, 618 bed, 619 bed, 620 bed, 621 bed, 622 bed, 623 bed, 624 bed, 625 bed, 626 bed, 627 bed, 628 bed, 629 bed, 630 bed, 631 bed, 632 bed, 633 bed, 634 bed, 635 bed, 636 bed, 637 bed, 638 bed, 639 bed, 640 bed, 641 bed, 642 bed, 643 bed, 644 bed, 645 bed, 646 bed, 647 bed, 648 bed, 649 bed, 650 bed, 651 bed, 652 bed, 653 bed, 654 bed, 655 bed, 656 bed, 657 bed, 658 bed, 659 bed, 660 bed, 661 bed, 662 bed, 663 bed, 664 bed, 665 bed, 666 bed, 667 bed, 668 bed, 669 bed, 670 bed, 671 bed, 672 bed, 673 bed, 674 bed, 675 bed, 676 bed, 677 bed, 678 bed, 679 bed, 680 bed, 681 bed, 682 bed, 683 bed, 684 bed, 685 bed, 686 bed, 687 bed, 688 bed, 689 bed, 690 bed, 691 bed, 692 bed, 693 bed, 694 bed, 695 bed, 696 bed, 697 bed, 698 bed, 699 bed, 700 bed, 701 bed, 702 bed, 703 bed, 704 bed, 705 bed, 706 bed, 707 bed, 708 bed, 709 bed, 710 bed, 711 bed, 712 bed, 713 bed, 714 bed, 715 bed, 716 bed, 717 bed, 718 bed, 719 bed, 720 bed, 721 bed, 722 bed, 723 bed, 724 bed, 725 bed, 726 bed, 727 bed, 728 bed, 729 bed, 730 bed, 731 bed, 732 bed, 733 bed, 734 bed, 735 bed, 736 bed, 737 bed, 738 bed, 739 bed, 740 bed, 741 bed, 742 bed, 743 bed, 744 bed, 745 bed, 746 bed, 747 bed, 748 bed, 749 bed, 750 bed, 751 bed, 752 bed, 753 bed, 754 bed, 755 bed, 756 bed, 757 bed, 758 bed, 759 bed, 760 bed, 761 bed, 762 bed, 763 bed, 764 bed, 765 bed, 766 bed, 767 bed, 768 bed, 769 bed, 770 bed, 771 bed, 772 bed, 773 bed, 774 bed, 775 bed, 776 bed, 777 bed, 778 bed, 779 bed, 780 bed, 781 bed, 782 bed, 783 bed, 784 bed, 785 bed, 786 bed, 787 bed, 788 bed, 789 bed, 790 bed, 791 bed, 792 bed, 793 bed, 794 bed, 795 bed, 796 bed, 797 bed, 798 bed, 799 bed, 800 bed, 801 bed, 802 bed, 803 bed, 804 bed, 805 bed, 806 bed, 807 bed, 808 bed, 809 bed, 810 bed, 811 bed, 812 bed, 813 bed, 814 bed, 815 bed, 816 bed, 817 bed, 818 bed, 819 bed, 820 bed, 821 bed, 822 bed, 823 bed, 824 bed, 825 bed, 826 bed, 827 bed, 828 bed, 829 bed, 830 bed, 831 bed, 832 bed, 833 bed, 834 bed, 835 bed, 836 bed, 837 bed, 838 bed, 839 bed, 840 bed, 841 bed, 842 bed, 843 bed, 844 bed, 845 bed, 846 bed, 847 bed, 848 bed, 849 bed, 850 bed, 851 bed, 852 bed, 853 bed, 854 bed, 855 bed, 856 bed, 857 bed, 858 bed, 859 bed, 860 bed, 861 bed, 862 bed, 863 bed, 864 bed, 865 bed, 866 bed, 867 bed, 868 bed, 869 bed, 870 bed, 871 bed, 872 bed, 873 bed, 874 bed, 875 bed, 876 bed, 877 bed, 878 bed, 879 bed, 880 bed, 881 bed, 882 bed, 883 bed, 884 bed, 885 bed, 886 bed, 887 bed, 888 bed, 889 bed, 890 bed, 89

Telephone:
0171 680 6806**A support role at the heart of Communications****Administration****Assistant****c. £15k****Central London**
6 month contract**CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATION**

Unbiased Reporting. Unbiased Recruiting.

Buy homes
throughout
the long
weekendAn inviting
retreat cottage
in the heart of
London. Whatever
you're looking for,
you can view it
here. Bank Holiday
is a long weekend
celebration for their
clients. Excellent luxury and sheer
entertainment. An outstanding
choice of bright airy designs
and attention to detail
make every Berkeley
Home a truly personal
experience with your choice of
finishes depending on
style of construction.Another day we
make
Berkeley Homes
are finer.**OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR****International software company
seeks administrator to help run a
new office in the City.**Responsibilities will include everything from reception duties
answering the telephone, managing bookings and managing office supplies. An enthusiastic, flexible, can-do
approach is important.Tremex is a leading edge financial solutions provider whose
clients include some of the world's most successful
organisations. The company employs 70 people and has
offices around Europe.

The package offered will reflect the quality of the candidate.

Please send a CV with covering letter and
salary details to Tom Coombes.Tremex Treasury Management, 1
Northumberland Avenue, Trafalgar Square,
London, WC2N 5BW
or e-mail tom.coombes@tremex.com**S.O.S. Employment Agency
Bermuda.****Hiring immediately:
Executive Secretaries for
Temporary Assignments.**Applicants must have excellent typing and computer skills,
legal experience & shorthand a definite asset. Min. 6
years secretarial experience.Renewable one-year work permits. Permanent positions
available after six months temping, with start salary of
US\$30,000.Please fax your resume to (441) 295-1495, attn: Judy John,
interviewing in London shortly. For more information, please
include name, confidential fax number.

Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP

PH&W, an American law firm with offices from California to
New York, requires a secretary for a senior associate in their
newly opened London office. Only candidates with good legal
experience, excellent skills using Word 97 and an enquiring
mind will be considered. Salary negotiable. Good knowledge of
German and WordPerfect 7 will bring its reward.Apply in writing to The Administrator, Mrs Jackie Beavis, Paul,
Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP, 60 Lombard Street,
London EC3V 9EA.**PA TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE**Chief Executive of small plc based in Slough
seeks a confident, individual to work as his
Personal Assistant. Must have commitment,
initiative, flexibility and excellent keyboard
skills. Modern languages and shorthand a
distinct advantage. Excellent package.
Interested?

Call Fay Farrington on 01622 607217

PA/DIRECTOR AND HOUSE DEPARTMENTof this lively and prestigious Knightsbridge Estate Agents.
Well spoken, computer literate and ability to deal with the
public required. Salary: Negotiable.

CV's in the first instance to:

Armands Craig, Hamptons International,
168 Brompton Road, Knightsbridge,
London, SW3 1HW. Tel: 0171 584 2044.**PA/Administrator, City Experience**20k+, London
Some Sc. areas - 1 person max office for NYC firm.
Should be numerate (20%), able to work alone. Undemanding for personal
marketing social contact at work. Computer literate. NON SPREAD. Excellent
language skills preferred. Good telephone and computer skills. Good
executive secretarial job includes managing production loads for office
and executive clients as well as client contact.

Please fax your CV to 0171 225 2304.

SECRETARIES**£18,000 + Bonus + PRP**We have a number of positions for Covent
Garden/Mayfair companies who need lively, social
and above all 'fun' secretaries. You will need 6-12
months commercial experience, 50 wpm typing
and an instant personality to cope in a hectic, fast
moving, client driven environment. Phone now for
an immediate interview. Age 21-28.CONTACT SIÂN COUCHMAN
TEL 0171-405 2340
FAX 0171-631 2999**Secretaries**We are looking for secretaries who have a
minimum of three years' secretarial experience.
You must be familiar with W4W 6.0, Excel and
email, and a second European language is
preferred but not essential. We have a number of
temporary and permanent positions within an
international bank that offer excellent rates of pay.
If interested please call Philip Hawke on
0171 481 1455.**Crème de la Crème**Fax:
0171 782 7586**PA TO HR DIRECTOR****CIRCA £22,000 PLUS EXCELLENT BENEFITS****WATERLOO**■ 3i, a FT-SE quoted plc, is the UK's leading venture capital provider to
unquoted companies and is committed to extending its position to
become Europe's leading specialist investor through its network of
European offices.■ As PA to the HR Director, key aspects of the role will be: to manage
a high volume of day-to-day business by e-mail, correspondence and
telephone; the diary management and organisation of a full and tight
schedule of meetings, overseas trips and business commitments; to act
as the focal point of communication between his office and a wide range
of internal and external contacts for which excellent interpersonal skills
are essential.■ You would be the critical information filter, anticipating needs, scheduling
effective plans and prioritising on your own initiative. An important aspect
of the role will be to attend and contribute to projects, for the UK and
Continental Europe upon which the HR Director is engaged and to be the
principal assistant, co-ordinator and progress chaser for such projects.■ A high level of intellect supported by excellent secretarial and PC
skills, together with a flexible approach to unpredictable and occasional
long hours, is essential for this unusually challenging position.Please write with full résumé
and salary history to:Robert Gregory, HR Director,
3i plc, 91 Waterloo Road,
London SE1 8XP.**WE WANT YOU TO SUCCEED****EXEC. SECRETARY BASED IN LONDON
(WC2) BUT TRAVELLING TO TOKYO
TO WORK 3 OR 4 TIMES A YEAR.**Experienced Sec. 25+ very fast accurate shorthand and typing are a
necessity to support our Client Executive with extensive interests in
UK/Europe/Far East.Must be able to prioritise, drive under pressure and meet deadlines.
Overseas will be necessary.Salary circa £20,000 p.a.
For CV with covering letter to 0171-636-7919.

(No Agencies)

RECEPTIONIST/**DEPARTMENTAL
SECRETARY**required for busy media
department of UK's largest
direct marketing agency. Must be
able to type and shorthand. Good
team player. Ideal role for
1st/2nd jobber with business
experience. Powerpoint/
Excel etc. Salary circa £13,000 +
bonuses. Please fax CV on 0171
313 4353 or call Candy Jones on
0171 313 4354.

(No Agencies)

**THE INNS OF COURT SCHOOL
OF LAW****PA TO THE PRINCIPAL****(Salary range £17,740 - £20,429)**The Inns of Court School of Law provides education and training for the Bar and offers a Bar
Vocational Course in both full and part time mode. The school has recently gained
independent status and is one of seven university law schools and independent institutions to
be validated by the Bar Council. The School is a charitable institution employing some 82
staff.A challenging opportunity has arisen for an experienced PA to manage the office of the new
Principal who takes up his appointment on 1 September 1997. The role will include
responsibility for providing secretarial and administrative support to the Principal,
undertaking research and compiling information.The ideal candidate will have relevant PA/Secretarial experience, excellent typing and audio-
typing skills and have the ability to draft correspondence. Excellent communication and
organisational skills are essential.Application forms and further details are available from the Personnel Office, The Inns
of Court School of Law, 4 Gray's Inn Place London, WC1R 5DX
(Tel: 0171 404 5787).

CLOSING DATE: 12 September 1997.

UMDS
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON**SURGERY & ANAESTHESIA
Senior Departmental
Secretary/PA
(Grade 5)****SALARY C. £18K**We require a person to be Senior Departmental Secretary/PA to the
Professor of Vascular Surgery at our St Thomas's Campus.You should have good personal computer and organisational skills
combined with strong interpersonal skills and an ability to motivate and
manage other staff.For further details please send an A4 size SAE, clearly indicating ref no.
T/SUR/SD/21 on the envelope to: UMDS Personnel Department, Medical
School Office, St Thomas's Campus, Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1 7EH.
Closing date: 10th September 1997.Promoting excellence in teaching, learning & research
Equality of Opportunity is School Policy**PERSONAL SECRETARY**Required for the Head of a thriving independent
educational establishment located close to Windsor,
commence as soon as possible.This demanding position calls for a professional person
who understands loyalty, integrity and diplomacy and is
willing to work long hours. The person appointed will
require to be totally committed. The ability to supervise and
motivate other staff is essential. A thorough working
knowledge of Microsoft Office 97 is a pre-requisite. No
other experience are relevant; energy, dedication and
ability are.The salary will be commensurate with the responsibilities.
Other benefits will be advised to interview.If you are ambitious and looking for a real challenge, send
your letter of application, in your own handwriting, together
with a detailed curriculum vitae to: The Secretary,
The City Gallery, 36 Hanover Street, Mayfair, London
W1K 2AL, no later than Tuesday, 2 September
1997. Final interviews will be held on Tuesday, 9
September 1997.PA/SEC
To £20k + BONUS
To a proactive PA/sec
who enjoys a fast environment
where work is
parcours.An unusual pleasant
outgoing character who would
like to develop and move.
Excellent opportunity with
unlimited earnings.

Tel: 0171 293 7000

**RECEPTIONIST/TEAM SEC FOR
MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY****£12-14k + Bonus**UMS Group is a highly successful consultancy providing world class
performance franchises in the UK and abroad. Recently established in the
UK, with headquarters in the USA, the office is small but rapidly expanding.
We are looking for a receptionist to join our team. You will be required to
answer the telephone, take messages, file, type, answer fax and deal with
post. You will also be required to answer the telephone and take messages
and file post. You will also be required to answer the telephone and take messages
and file post.For more information please contact Glyn 0171 571 3819, or send
your CV and letter to UMS Group Ltd, 195 Knightsbridge, London,
SW7 1RE.EXECUTIVE PA
£24k + bonus
plus relocation packageThis prestigious
international company
seeks a PA with
hands-on experience,
4 years working at Director
level essential.Position available
for a female aged
between 21-35 need
apply.Chairman Recruitment
Consultants
Tel: 0171 481 1255.**SECRETARY****£15,000**

Plus Bonus

Required by Small Kensington property company with
Word/Excel. Must be Ambitious, energetic and show initiative.

Please send CV and covering letter to:

Mrs Jo brooker

23 Cavaye Place,

London SW10 9PT

Fax: 0171 373 7807

CENTRE POINT GROUP
BANK AND SECRETARIAL RECRUITMENT SPECIALISTS**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY/PA****£26,000**An opportunity has arisen for a well-educated
secretary/PA to join a prestigious City company where
110% commitment and first class skills are rewarded by
a lively atmosphere, excellent remuneration and the
enjoyment of being part of a thriving and professional
environment. If you are 22-35, enjoy responsibility, have
Word, Excel and PowerPoint, preferably good shorthand
and experience of the City, please call.**ROYDS****RAPHAEL**PERSONNEL PA MEDEA-£22k
An experienced PA required for a fast-paced
environment. PA required in London
area. Good communication skills and
experience. A diplomatic
approach is essential to "hold the
line" and deal with difficult
clients. Good organisational
and administrative skills are
essential, together with conversational French.

TEL: 0171 332 0995 ♦ FAX: 0171 332 0996

**TRAINING
MANAGER****£28K ++**The ability to both identify and fulfil
training needs will be key to your success in
this role. Our client, a city financial services
organisation need an experienced trainer
(preferably IPD qualified) to join the HR
team. Developing and the delivery
of training programmes will be your main
responsibility as well as evaluation and
analysis. You will of course need excellent
interpersonal and project management skills
and ideally previous supervisory experience.This is a proactive role for a conscientious
individual who recognises the real value of
training and staff development.**COVENT GARDEN BUREAU****SECRETARIAL****£17,000**An international academic organisation based in London WC1
seeks a Committee Administrator with Secretarial Skills
(shorthand and Microsoft office) to provide support for
Secretary General.A background in academia would be helpful and a willingness
to travel; confidence and reliability are essential.Acme
Appointments
0171 629 7232**INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION****to £25,000**An international academic organisation based in London WC1
seeks a Committee Administrator with Secretarial Skills
(shorthand and Microsoft office) to provide support for
Secretary General.A background in academia would be helpful and a willingness
to travel; confidence and reliability are essential.Acme
Appointments
0171 495 2822**Hays Banking Personnel****SECRETARIAL DIVISION****HUMAN RESOURCES ASSISTANT**

Telephone:
0171 680 6806

Crème de la Crème

ROOM AT THE TOP

Executive Media PA

£26,000

BANKING £25,000 + EXC BENS

Build on your banking experience. We have senior level banking positions offering variety and involvement. Would suit organised PA's used to a fast paced environment. Powerpoint an advantage.

Please telephone 0171 628 9529.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

BE A SPORTING STAR

£17,000

This highly successful sports media company with a prestigious client base is looking for an Assistant Administrator. The involving position will entail dealing with clients on a regular basis, co-ordinating meetings and diaries as well as typing presentations and correspondence. You will need to be an excellent communicator with a professional and dedicated attitude. The ideal applicant will have a minimum of six months' administration/secretarial experience in addition to fast accurate typing skills and an excellent knowledge of Microsoft. Please call us now.

Committed to equal opportunities

0171 287 7788

Angela Mortimer

VICTORIA £23,000

Plus gym membership. You will be based in the superb offices of the International company which really values its staff. You will be encouraged to use your initiative in this true PA role. 80wpm shorthand / 55wpm typing.

Please telephone 0171 495 2321.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

PIVOTAL PA

£35,000 package

One of the City's leading institution is looking for a top-flight PA to support a new Main Board Director. Young, high-flying and charming to work with, he needs a professional ambassador who is confident in their handling of confidential information and high-profile clients. Previous senior level experience in banking or HR would be an advantage as well as the desire to work in a pressurised, challenging and pivotal role. Skills of 80/60.

Committed to equal opportunities

0171 814 0800

Angela Mortimer

PRESIDENT'S PA £25,000

Package £30K. West end based American company involved in venture capital have an opportunity for an experienced City PA with top organisational ability. Must be used to extensive international liaison and ever changing priorities. Age late 20s - 30s 50/55 skills.

Please telephone 0171 495 2321.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

TRADING FLOOR

£25,000 + Bonus

An outstanding opportunity to work for a leading City based International Bank. As well as providing secretarial support to a dynamic Equities team you will also be organising roadshows, corporate hospitality and liaison with clients. A strong, confident personality is well as banking experience essential.

Please contact Margaret Somers.

JOHNATHAN WISE & CO LTD,
FINANCIAL RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS
NO.1 NEW STREET, LONDON EC4M 4TP
TEL: 0171 623 1265 FAX: 0171 625 5259

© 1997 JOHNATHAN WISE & CO LTD

© 1997 JOHNATHAN WISE & CO LTD

You will need a high level of commitment for this position. Displays a high level of tact and diplomacy. Good experience of 5 years' experience at a senior level. Shorthand 55wpm, computer keyboarding knowledge of word.

Committed to equal opportunities.

0171 287 7788

© 1997 JOHNATHAN WISE & CO LTD

© 1997 JOHNATHAN WISE & CO LTD

MAIDENHEAD
£NEG

This autonomous and very challenging role offers complete involvement at senior level. For this 1:1 position you will need experience of a fast paced and demanding environment. Excellent career move.

50wpm typing.

Please telephone 0171 495 2321.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

LEGAL PA £25,000

Plus car. This friendly, progressive law firm is offering an excellent opportunity to develop your legal career. Plenty of variety and involvement with your own responsibilities from day one. 60wpm audio.

Please telephone 0171 495 2321.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

MAINE - TUCKER RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

one in a million..
up to £24,000

We are looking for someone very special who may be interested in a professional, dynamic and personal to work in a family run business of over 100 yrs old. We seek a very sharp, outgoing, "go-ahead" who is the company's Chairman. Secretarial skills (100hrs/wk, 50 typed) are negotiable, but what will really win you this job is your respect for tradition, your honesty, patience and ability to see opportunities in your job, other than what is given to you. Despite being a senior position it is a £30,000 start with no meetings so if you want to work in a very special environment, then you need to be a £20,000 plus plus plus. Call Steve now for interview or fax CV to:

18-21 Jermyn Street, St James, London SW1Y 6EP
Telephone: 0171 734 5344 Fax: 0171 734 5260

MAINE - TUCKER RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

Presentations/DTP Whizz!

£22,000 + paid o/time, pens, bonus.

21 days hols, gym, st1

If you have any PA experience to create works of art then this could be for you. Working in the editorial dept you'll be part of a young, bold team creating art, design, graphics and print. You will need to have a thorough understanding of design and layout, and a complete knowledge of PageMaker and QuarkXPress (Illustrator & Excel are useful but not essential). You don't need similar experience as maybe you've been doing part-time work and you'd like a change. If you're a good team member like a creative PA and want to have more, call us now.

18-21 Jermyn Street, St James, London SW1Y 6EP
Telephone: 0171 734 5344 Fax: 0171 734 5260

MAINE - TUCKER RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

Just a Lovely Company.....

£19,000 + pens, free lunch, gym.

5 weeks hols, st1

If there's a place to be in London, then this is the place to work. You'll be part of a dynamic, fast growing team of professionals in a fast paced environment. You'll be involved in a variety of projects, working alongside the finance, marketing, communications and IT departments. You'll be part of a team that's been together for 10 years and have the opportunity to work with some of the best and most experienced professionals in the business. If you're a good team member like a creative PA and want to have more, call us now.

18-21 Jermyn Street, St James, London SW1Y 6EP
Telephone: 0171 734 5344 Fax: 0171 734 5260

MAINE - TUCKER RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

Senior PA - No Shorthand Necessary!

up to £25,000 + share option

Get up to £25,000 + share option, family run business of over 100 yrs old. We seek a very sharp, outgoing, "go-ahead" who is the company's Chairman. Secretarial skills (100hrs/wk, 50 typed) are negotiable, but what will really win you this job is your respect for tradition, your honesty, patience and ability to see opportunities in your job, other than what is given to you. Despite being a senior position it is a £30,000 start with no meetings so if you want to work in a very special environment, then you need to be a £20,000 plus plus plus. Call Steve now for interview or fax CV to:

18-21 Jermyn Street, St James, London SW1Y 6EP
Telephone: 0171 734 5344 Fax: 0171 734 5260

PARTNERS PA £21,000 +++

Exciting opportunity to assist new partner within Int'l Management Consultancy. Implementing new systems, liaison with internal/external clients, arranging extensive travel/mileage along with lots of Marketing administration. Typing presentations & reports using Excel & PowerPoint. Involved role for highly organised PA. Basic PRP/cn/Health/Gym/Office+++. Typ 60 wpm/MS office. Call Karen Hutchinson 0171 256 6668.

LOVE & STATE

HOBSTONES TEMPORARY LEGAL SECRETARIES GUARANTEED £12 p/Hr

If you have at least 2 years recent legal experience and 65wpm audio typing, we will guarantee you £12 per hour for assignments in law firms in the West End or City.

We offer:

- Immediate assignments
- Short and long term contracts
- In-house training on the most up to date software
- Paid overtime
- Direct pay into your bank account

Call LISA BLOOMFIELD
now on
0171 550 7000

LEGAL RECRUITMENT

PA TO chief exec

£24K + benefits

GORDON YATES

For recruitment

JOHNATHAN WISE & CO LTD

© 1997 JOHNATHAN WISE & CO LTD

HODGE

Legal Eagles
£20,000 + Bens

Our client, a leading City Law Firm has numerous opportunities for energetic secretaries looking for progression and greater challenges. A confident personality is essential when dealing with clients' worldwide. Other responsibilities will include: diary management, audio typing, travel, arranging and administration tasks relating to project work. Fast accurate typing and Word for Windows experience essential. Age to 40. Skills: W4W.

Powerpoint and minimum 70 wpm shorthand. Please call Samantha Garner on 0171 390 7000.

© 1997 JOHNATHAN WISE & CO LTD

OUTSTANDING PA'S earn up to £35,000

35K - CHAIRMAN'S PA - Managing Director of a major PR company with top City experience. Age 25-30.

30K - CHALLENGE - Experienced PA who thrives in press and environmental media relations. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office, developing business contacts. Experience. Age 25-30.

25K - PERSONAL WORK - in a fast growing PA's office

SWIMMING

Move to Bath earns Palmer pool jackpot

FROM CRAIG LORD IN SEVILLE

PAUL PALMER'S victory in the 200 metres freestyle on the first day of the European championships here yesterday follows a season of uncertainty in which his coach, Ian Turner, had to coax and cajole his swimmer back into full training after his success in the Olympic Games in Atlanta last year.

The dispute in the most successful partnership in British swimming was settled as the winter turned to spring, but the humour of the crisis was not lost yesterday on Palmer, who is favourite to win the 400 metres here.

He turned to Turner and asked: "Does this mean I can miss the 400 [metres]?" "No, it bloody doesn't."

Results 40

came the reply and coach and swimmer shared the laugh.

It was very different in January. As Turner left Heathrow Airport for a training camp in Australia, he believed that the Olympic silver medal-winner in the 400 metres freestyle would be following him within a few days, after a skiing holiday.

Palmer, 22, arrived at the airport but a delay in his flight gave him time to question what he was about to embark on. As his fellow passengers headed to the departure gate, Palmer turned instead to the car park and back to his family in Lincoln.

He had moved with Turner last autumn from Lincoln to Bath University's elite sports village and has trained permanently in a long-course 50-metre pool for the first time in his swimming career. After

his "psychological blip", Palmer had got back into serious training late in the year.

His last international victory was one of three at the 1991 European junior championships and was followed by three silver medals at senior international level, all over 400 metres.

The third was his Olympic effort, which helped to secure a £14,000 lottery grant this year for the man who drew the public's attention to the financial plight of British athletes in Atlanta last year.

Palmer yesterday put his victory down to Turner and his move to Bath, which offers full support for elite athletes and has meant that Turner was able to give up his job as a school teacher and concentrate on coaching full-time.

Palmer believes that the British 4x200 metres relay team can win the European title today and that the 400 metres two days later could bring him a third gold medal.

"You know, spirits are high and the team should get the gold. That will be a great boost," he said.

James Salter, who missed the bronze medal by one hundredth of a second in the 200 metres freestyle, behind Palmer, took consolation from his team-mate's words: "I'll just have to make good when it counts for the relay."

Elsewhere for Britain, there were fourth and fifth places in the 100 metres freestyle for Sue Ralph and Karen Pickering. Competing against the might of Germany in the middle two lanes, Sandra Volker and Anja Buschschulte, and the experienced Slovaks, Martina Moravcova, the British pair would have had to break Pickering's 1994 national record of



Palmer celebrates his thrilling victory in the 200 metres freestyle in Seville yesterday

55.9sec to challenge for medals. Pickering, 25, did well to set her season's best of 56.1sec for fifth place, suggesting that her back problems caused by a car crash in the autumn are over. Ralph, the 19-year-old from Newcastle, clocked 56.0sec to go one place better, finishing 0.7sec adrift of Volker, the winner.

Ralph's performance augurs well

for the 200 metres medley later in the week. She is the third-fastest entrant, although the favourite remains Michelle Smith, the triple Olympic gold medal-winner, from Ireland.

Yesterday, Smith, swimming under her married name of De Bruin, won the 400 metres medley in a battle with a 15-year-old Ukrainian newcomer, Yana Kloch-

kova. The teenager took the lead with 150 metres to go during the breaststroke leg, but Smith fought back to draw level down the first of two freestyle lengths. What followed was a victory of power over technique. Within 20 metres of the turn, the Irishwoman had opened one-second lead and held on until the end, even easing up over the final four metres to win in 4min 42.08sec.

EQUESTRIANISM

Change of heart gives Stark his Burghley chance

By JENNY MACARTHUR

IAN STARK has had an eleven-hour call-up for the British squad for the Pedigree Chum Open European three-day event championships at Burghley next month after a change of heart by Lord and Lady Vestey, the owners of his horse Arakai.

In a surprise announcement yesterday, Stark — together with Christopher Bartle, Anne-Marie Evans, William Fox-Pitt, Kristina Gifford and Mary King — was named in the squad of six from which the team of four will be chosen. Brian, who have won five out of the past six European championships, are defending the title won in Italy two years ago.

Stark's chances of selection this year had looked slender when Stanwick Ghost, his leading horse, injured a leg after Badminton and Arakai, the New Zealand thoroughbred on which he was fourteenth at Badminton, was deemed to be too inexperienced for a championship.

A disappointed Stark decided to have another "chat" with the Vesties after the young horse's faultless performance at Auchincleek in Ayrshire last month. "I told them he felt much more grown up and had matured a great deal," Stark said.

The owners' response was to "wait and see" until after Thirlestane last weekend, where the long-listed riders were having their final trials. After another superb round there, the Vesties — to the delight of Giles Rowell, the chairman of the selectors — confirmed that Arakai was available for selection.

Stark's inclusion is not the only one. Gifford, whose General Jock was in the gold medal-winning team at the 1994 world championships, missed Badminton in May, the main selection

trial, because of the 12-year-old gelding's perennial foot problems. Rowell told Gifford that if she could "sort out" the horse's feet and prove his fitness at Gatcombe, she would be considered. Gifford, who lives in Sussex, found an appropriate farmer in Leicestershire, where she now takes the horse every three weeks. Twelfth place at Gatcombe fulfilled the selectors' second request.

Fox-Pitt and King, members of the Olympic Games squad in Atlanta, are likely to form the nucleus of the team. Bartle, the team dressage trainer, is, at 35, the "new boy". Better known for his dressage exploits — he was sixth at the Los Angeles Olympics — his selection on *World Perfect* follows his convincing win at Thirlestane.

Two notable absences from the squad are Karen Dixon, who broke her leg at Thirlestane, and Pippa Funnell, who will compete as an individual on *Bit N Pieces* after the latter's disappointing results at the water at the final trial.

Funnell's mistake led to the stylish Evans, who competed as an individual at the 1986 world championships and now makes a welcome return to the team on *Dutch Treat*.

"It's a team of tough, experienced riders," Rowell said. "It will need to be. Michael Tucker, who has replaced Mark Phillips as course designer this year, unveiled his selection on *World Perfect* follows his convincing win at Thirlestane.

Stark's inclusion is not the only one. Gifford, whose General Jock was in the gold medal-winning team at the 1994 world championships, missed Badminton in May, the main selection

Multilingual Crème

Languages Galore!

City, West End,
Docklands

Crème Corkill Multilingual temps division has an extensive range of exciting assignments offering you the opportunity to maximise your language skills within a variety of prestigious companies — across London.

If you are fluent in any European language, have good systems and can type at 50wpm... please call Zoe for an immediate start on 0171 390 7000

Crone Corkill

Multilingual Recruitment

Bilingualgroup

Toutes secrétaires et Standardistes... EEE's Excellentes postes dans de entreprises internationales en France et en Angleterre.

Alle Sekretärinnen und PA's... EEE's viele secrétaires et Standardistes dans les entreprises internationales en France et en Angleterre.

Nederlandse Secretarissen opgeleid!

Nederlandse sekretärinnen, begeleid, en begeleidt om te vaste hout. Leuk in Nederland, in een anderland. Nederlandse team.

Calling all customer service executives! EEE's... Many excellent positions in IT in London and Home counties.

Euro langs. Fr. Sp. Ch. It. De. Sw.

BILINGUAL GROUP Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. To PA/secretarial role. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

DUTCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171 493 6155

GERMAN & FRENCH temps. Tel. 0171 493 5045 Fax: 0171

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY AUGUST 20 1997

SPORT 39

RACING: DETTORI LAVISHES HIGH PRAISE ON HIS JUDDMONTES INTERNATIONAL STAKES WINNER

Singspiel shows hallmark of true champion

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

WITH the Ashes returning to Australia, our athletes suffering from a severe dose of secondeitis and Tiger Woods having eclipsed Faldo, Ballesteros and Co, Britain can do with every world champion it can muster. And yesterday one was acclaimed amid tumultuous scenes on the Knave'smire.

After watching the Juddmonte International Stakes, in which Singspiel and Frankie Dettori beat the Derby winners from Epsom and the Curragh along with the mighty Bosra Sham, the best horse Henry Cecil has trained, the knowledgeable York crowd gave full vent to their appreciation of horse and rider.

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Knave'smire. And Dettori was the very man to sense the importance of the occasion.

After returning to the winner's enclosure with arms aloft, he threw his whip in the style of a javelin towards the weighing room, treated the crowd to his copyright leap

from the saddle — before landing Singspiel.

He is undoubtedly the heavyweight champion horse of the world. He has beaten them all now: Bosra, Sham, Helios and the top American horses. Full credit must go to Michael Stoute because Singspiel had a hard race in the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II Stakes at Ascot, but he has come back and that is the sign of a true champion.

After defeat he has come back and won a race of this magnitude. Let's not forget, horses are not machines. Sometimes they get beaten.

No, doubt, he is the best horse I have ridden and I have ridden some great horses, like Lammtarra and Halfing, but, for all-round performance and guts, he has to be the best horse."

Even Michael Stoute, not a man easily given to hyperbole, was moved to exclaim: "He's a proper pro. What a display.

He was always travelling so well one didn't have an anxious moment. It was a superbly professional display."

Indeedly, the winner of the Dubai World Cup, Japan Cup, Canadian International Stakes and Coronation Cup, was allowed to go off at 4-1 as favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Bookmakers backed Bosra Sham down to 5-4 on. "I just whistled to Singspiel, they have insulted you again old boy," Stoute said.

Benny The Dip set a reasonable pace but Singspiel came cruising past just over two furlongs from home and Desert King stayed on well inside the last 200 yards to grab the minor honours.

Turning for home, Bosra Sham lost a shoe from the hoof she bruised last week and never looked a danger. "I am not making any excuses; a very good horse won," Henry Cecil, his trainer, said. "But losing a shoe did not help. I was a bit disappointed. I think she can do better than that, but there will be another day."

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.



Dettori signals his delight as Singspiel storms clear in the Juddmonte International Stakes at York yesterday

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Knave'smire. And Dettori was the very man to sense the importance of the occasion.

After returning to the winner's enclosure with arms aloft, he threw his whip in the style of a javelin towards the weighing room, treated the crowd to his copyright leap

from the saddle — before landing Singspiel.

Even Michael Stoute, not a man easily given to hyperbole, was moved to exclaim: "He's a proper pro. What a display.

He was always travelling so well one didn't have an anxious moment. It was a superbly professional display."

Indeedly, the winner of the Dubai World Cup, Japan Cup, Canadian International Stakes and Coronation Cup, was allowed to go off at 4-1 as favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Knave'smire. And Dettori was the very man to sense the importance of the occasion.

After returning to the winner's enclosure with arms aloft, he threw his whip in the style of a javelin towards the weighing room, treated the crowd to his copyright leap

from the saddle — before landing Singspiel.

Even Michael Stoute, not a man easily given to hyperbole, was moved to exclaim: "He's a proper pro. What a display.

He was always travelling so well one didn't have an anxious moment. It was a superbly professional display."

Indeedly, the winner of the Dubai World Cup, Japan Cup, Canadian International Stakes and Coronation Cup, was allowed to go off at 4-1 as favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Knave'smire. And Dettori was the very man to sense the importance of the occasion.

After returning to the winner's enclosure with arms aloft, he threw his whip in the style of a javelin towards the weighing room, treated the crowd to his copyright leap

from the saddle — before landing Singspiel.

Even Michael Stoute, not a man easily given to hyperbole, was moved to exclaim: "He's a proper pro. What a display.

He was always travelling so well one didn't have an anxious moment. It was a superbly professional display."

Indeedly, the winner of the Dubai World Cup, Japan Cup, Canadian International Stakes and Coronation Cup, was allowed to go off at 4-1 as favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Knave'smire. And Dettori was the very man to sense the importance of the occasion.

After returning to the winner's enclosure with arms aloft, he threw his whip in the style of a javelin towards the weighing room, treated the crowd to his copyright leap

from the saddle — before landing Singspiel.

Even Michael Stoute, not a man easily given to hyperbole, was moved to exclaim: "He's a proper pro. What a display.

He was always travelling so well one didn't have an anxious moment. It was a superbly professional display."

Indeedly, the winner of the Dubai World Cup, Japan Cup, Canadian International Stakes and Coronation Cup, was allowed to go off at 4-1 as favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Knave'smire. And Dettori was the very man to sense the importance of the occasion.

After returning to the winner's enclosure with arms aloft, he threw his whip in the style of a javelin towards the weighing room, treated the crowd to his copyright leap

from the saddle — before landing Singspiel.

Even Michael Stoute, not a man easily given to hyperbole, was moved to exclaim: "He's a proper pro. What a display.

He was always travelling so well one didn't have an anxious moment. It was a superbly professional display."

Indeedly, the winner of the Dubai World Cup, Japan Cup, Canadian International Stakes and Coronation Cup, was allowed to go off at 4-1 as favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Knave'smire. And Dettori was the very man to sense the importance of the occasion.

After returning to the winner's enclosure with arms aloft, he threw his whip in the style of a javelin towards the weighing room, treated the crowd to his copyright leap

from the saddle — before landing Singspiel.

Even Michael Stoute, not a man easily given to hyperbole, was moved to exclaim: "He's a proper pro. What a display.

He was always travelling so well one didn't have an anxious moment. It was a superbly professional display."

Indeedly, the winner of the Dubai World Cup, Japan Cup, Canadian International Stakes and Coronation Cup, was allowed to go off at 4-1 as favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Knave'smire. And Dettori was the very man to sense the importance of the occasion.

After returning to the winner's enclosure with arms aloft, he threw his whip in the style of a javelin towards the weighing room, treated the crowd to his copyright leap

from the saddle — before landing Singspiel.

Even Michael Stoute, not a man easily given to hyperbole, was moved to exclaim: "He's a proper pro. What a display.

He was always travelling so well one didn't have an anxious moment. It was a superbly professional display."

Indeedly, the winner of the Dubai World Cup, Japan Cup, Canadian International Stakes and Coronation Cup, was allowed to go off at 4-1 as favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Knave'smire. And Dettori was the very man to sense the importance of the occasion.

After returning to the winner's enclosure with arms aloft, he threw his whip in the style of a javelin towards the weighing room, treated the crowd to his copyright leap

from the saddle — before landing Singspiel.

Even Michael Stoute, not a man easily given to hyperbole, was moved to exclaim: "He's a proper pro. What a display.

He was always travelling so well one didn't have an anxious moment. It was a superbly professional display."

Indeedly, the winner of the Dubai World Cup, Japan Cup, Canadian International Stakes and Coronation Cup, was allowed to go off at 4-1 as favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Knave'smire. And Dettori was the very man to sense the importance of the occasion.

After returning to the winner's enclosure with arms aloft, he threw his whip in the style of a javelin towards the weighing room, treated the crowd to his copyright leap

from the saddle — before landing Singspiel.

Even Michael Stoute, not a man easily given to hyperbole, was moved to exclaim: "He's a proper pro. What a display.

He was always travelling so well one didn't have an anxious moment. It was a superbly professional display."

Indeedly, the winner of the Dubai World Cup, Japan Cup, Canadian International Stakes and Coronation Cup, was allowed to go off at 4-1 as favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Knave'smire. And Dettori was the very man to sense the importance of the occasion.

After returning to the winner's enclosure with arms aloft, he threw his whip in the style of a javelin towards the weighing room, treated the crowd to his copyright leap

from the saddle — before landing Singspiel.

Even Michael Stoute, not a man easily given to hyperbole, was moved to exclaim: "He's a proper pro. What a display.

He was always travelling so well one didn't have an anxious moment. It was a superbly professional display."

Indeedly, the winner of the Dubai World Cup, Japan Cup, Canadian International Stakes and Coronation Cup, was allowed to go off at 4-1 as favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Singspiel has now run his last race in Europe. His final target will be the Breeders' Cup in the United States, where the Classic is the most likely option. He may have a prep race there beforehand.

With Dettori on such a high, he galvanised Singspiel into producing his best performance to beat Silver Pariarch, the Derby runner-up, in the Great Voltigeur Stakes. The Godolphin horse is now 2-1 favourite with the Tote for the St Leger.

Such public displays of excitement and approval used to be reserved for an entirely different kind of sport three centuries ago when they hung highwaymen, sheep stealers and other ne'er-do-wells on the Kn

Driven over the boundary of logic

You would think that a politician who chose to withdraw for a time from public life and public pronouncements would know when to make a comeback. A cynical observer of political life — that is to say, anyone that ever picked up a newspaper — would think that a politician who chose a brief spell of exile would spend the entire period of his absence plotting the dramatic return.

I shall never be cynical about a politician again for John Major has leapt back into public life with all the forethought and planning of the Last of the Brudenells at the head of the Light Brigade. He could not help himself. The subject, you see, was cricket.

The conspiracy theorist might think that this was a brilliant improvisation, exploiting a populist issue such as sport. Major had been biding his time, waiting for just such a moment as this, when he might remind his former public that it is he, and not the present Prime Minister, who has the common touch: that it is he, the Brixton boy, he alone that under-

stands what makes a British heart beat.

But this was no planned move. It was a simple matter of emotional incontinence. It was cricket, you see, and — truly, madly, deeply — Major cares. He is in thrall to its many and varied mythologies. Cricket, sport, does that to people, even to former prime ministers.

The issue that roused his sleeping passions was the suggestion, from the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, that the proposed lottery-funded British Academy of Sport should concentrate on Olympic sports — to the exclusion of the team sports, such as football, rugby union and, yes, cricket. "Sheer political spite," Major said, rather bafflingly. No, the plan should be changed "before it makes a mockery of our nation's sporting ambitions."

Sorry, John, but the England cricket team has already done that. They managed that long before the Labour Government got in, reaching a nadir of sorts in Zimbabwe. Major went on about "the Government's ill-judged decision", but he showed an

SIMON BARNES



Midweek View

uncanny lack of judgment himself. "They have excluded," he thundered, "precisely those sports which most bring the nation together."

Well, nearly right. If you wish to be bothered by the actual facts, the team sports on which Major is so keen are coldly and deliberately organised to maximise their divisive effect. The United Kingdom, the country — correct me if I am wrong — over which Major held sway as

Prime Minister, actually has four national football teams; for that matter, 3½ national rugby union teams.

The history of both cricket and rugby union as aspects of the class war hardly needs restating here. The Norman Tebbit cricket test highlights deep divisions in society. In short, international sport is utterly divisive and Major was speaking utterly without thinking. For Major, as for most people, one of sport's great charms is that it lets us off thinking.

We had a general election and, as Sam Goldwyn had it, we have all passed a lot of water since then. And there have been plenty of contentious issues, matters esculent to those with a taste for such things. But it was not war and peace and justice and mercy and human rights and human wrongs that roused Major from his lair. It was cricket.

Sport. People love it with a passion that makes no sense. Sport subsumes rationality. Real life, what is that? It is for the sort of people who cannot handle sport. Like all forms of incontinent love, sporting

love makes fools of people and its victims don't care.

Sport is the powerful stuff. In Japan, drunkenness is accepted as a legitimate holiday from politeness and the necessary formal measure of everyday life. In this country, sport is nothing less than a holiday from rationality itself.

I do not intend these words to be critical. I do not set myself up as a wholly rational Cartesian being. No one who spends as much money as I do on horses can make serious claims for rationality. Or sanity. Horses are my folly and joy and there's an end to the matter.

Cricket is Major's joy and good luck to him, but the joys of sport stem from sport's perfect triviality. It is as well to bear this in mind, also the fact that sport is folly and nobody who finds joy in it can escape that small touch of foolishness that sport imposes on us. To bowdlerise the words of Sonny Barger, president of the Oakland Chapter of the Hell's Angels, to the policeman at Bass Lake: "Sheriff, we're all fools, or we wouldn't be here."

BOWLS: FOURS TEAMS FROM SAME COUNTY CLOSE IN ON PLACES IN FINAL

Somerset ready to repeat rare feat

By DAVID RYH JONES

THE prospect of an all-Somerset final was exciting a large crowd at Beach House Park last night after teams from Clevedon and Bridgwater qualified for this morning's semi-finals of the English Bowls Association's national fours championship.

Clevedon defeated John Simmons and his Garston club-mates from Hertfordshire, 26-10, in the quarter-finals yesterday, while Bridgwater BCL scored 15 shots in five mid-game ends on their way to a 27-13 win.

Results —————— 40



Bill Hamilton, of Warwickshire, sets a wood in motion with style at the national championships at Worthing

over Buckden, who beat Tony Alcock's Cheltenham on Monday.

Every county sends two representatives to Worthing in each of the four leading events and they are seeded in separate halves of the draw, but the chances of two teams from the same county meeting in the final are extremely slim.

Strangely, Somerset has achieved the distinction twice, once in 1978, when David Bryant was beaten by Charlie Burchin in the singles final, and again the following year, when teams from Bristol and Weston-super-Mare met in the triples final.

Roy Hedges, now plays for Clevedon, was in the Bristol trio 18 years ago and is hoping to win his second

English title, while Pip Branfield, Clevedon's third man, skipped the club to the triples title in 1984. Steve Withers is at lead and Graham Luker at skip.

The Bridgwater quartet's

story is a dream come true for a brand new combination, in particular for Barry Smith, Mike Davies and Don Fowkes, who will be defending their national triples title later this week. Smith, who had not played bowls for 13 years, came out of retirement last summer to partner Davies and Fowkes, who moved to the British Cellophane Club from Banwell and Burnham respectively, so that they could play together.

The scratch combination proved irresistible. First at county level, then at Wor-

thing, the three have gone from strength to strength. This season, they have introduced Richard Billington, a bubbly character, at third man, and have showed they can win at fours as well as triples.

The British Cellophane Club is no longer part of the recreational facilities provided by the Bridgwater-based plastics firm, so there has been a change of name since last season and the champions are competing in the fours and defending their triples title as members of Bridgwater BCL in the semi-finals today.

The scratch combination proved irresistible. First at

Bridgwater will play a strong four from Rainworth Miners Welfare, skipped by Keith Davies, who beat Bournemouth 20-13.

Clevedon's task looks tougher. They play Swindon Westcott, who they know well from national indoor competition, as they compete in the same region. The Swindon back-end, Mel Biggs and Steve Warren, won the England pairs title two years ago and Warren, an inspirational skip who wears his heart on his sleeve, is reportedly in fine form this summer.

Bill Hamilton, of Warwickshire, sets a wood in motion with style at the national championships at Worthing

thing, the three have gone from strength to strength. This season, they have introduced Richard Billington, a bubbly character, at third man, and have showed they can win at fours as well as triples.

The British Cellophane Club is no longer part of the recreational facilities provided by the Bridgwater-based plastics firm, so there has been a change of name since last season and the champions are competing in the fours and defending their triples title as members of Bridgwater BCL in the semi-finals today.

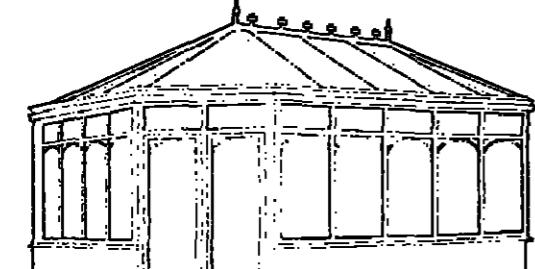
The scratch combination proved irresistible. First at

Bridgwater will play a strong four from Rainworth Miners Welfare, skipped by Keith Davies, who beat Bournemouth 20-13.

Clevedon's task looks tougher. They play Swindon Westcott, who they know well from national indoor competition, as they compete in the same region. The Swindon back-end, Mel Biggs and Steve Warren, won the England pairs title two years ago and Warren, an inspirational skip who wears his heart on his sleeve, is reportedly in fine form this summer.

BERKLEY CONSERVATORIES LIMITED

A Prestige conservatory at no cost?



IT'S TRUE. Our ingenious financial planning programme could enable you to own a beautiful new prestige conservatory without increasing your current monthly outlay

CASHBACK PLAN. You can even claim the entire price of the conservatory back after five years with our fully refreshed Cashback plan. To find out how to increase your living space and add value to your home without increasing your monthly expenditure, call 0800 220873

Lines open seven days a week until 9.00pm.

*Offer subject to status. Written details on request. Cashback plan vetted by Financial Services Association

FREEPHONE 0800 220873
WINDSOR, BERKSHIRE SL4 1SE

The highest quality PVCu or hardwood conservatories designed and tailor-made for your home

Professional installation by certified craftsmen

Complete build package available including electrics, heating and ventilation

High security, low maintenance

10 year insurance backed guarantee

Offer subject to status. Written details on request. Cashback plan vetted by Financial Services Association



TENNIS

Henman and Rusedski at mercy of draw in US Open

BY JULIAN MUSCAT

TIM HENMAN and Greg Rusedski have missed out on seeded berths at the US Open, which begins at Flushing Meadow, New York, on Monday. Although the Britons moved up the world rankings this week, the presence of all 16 of the leading men has them at the mercy of the draw tomorrow.

Both players performed well at New Haven, Connecticut, last week, but first-round losses in earlier tournaments compromised their rankings.

Henman advanced by one place, to No 20, after reaching the quarter-finals at New Haven.

Rusedski jumped four places, to a career-best No 23 after his semi-final defeat by Yevgeny Kafelnikov, the eventual winner.

Henman, the British No 1, has more to lose from an early exit at Flushing Meadow.

Having reached the quarter-

finals 12 months ago, his ranking will slip appreciably if he makes an early exit.

Rusedski last night was due to play his opening-round match in the MFS Pro Championships in Boston.

Should he reach the third round, he will

almost certainly overtake

Henman, who has forsaken

tournament play this week, in

favour of practice. Last year, he was not on the opening committee, controversially strayed from the players' official rankings. Among those downgraded was Kafelnikov, who withdrew in protest. This

is the committee's

time, the committee has resisted the urge: Kafelnikov is seeded No 3 behind Pete Sampras, the top seed and defending champion, and Michael Chang, Sampras, with ten grand slam tournament wins to his name, is bidding to close down on Roy Emerson's record of 12.

Boris Becker, seeded No 13, is due to play his last grand slam event before retiring later this year. However, his participation has been thrown into doubt by the death of Axel Meyer-Woelde, 38, a close friend and business associate.

Becker, who pulled out of the Boston event on hearing the news, has not played for four weeks because of injury.

In the women's singles, Martina Hingis, beaten just twice this year, is the youngest No 1 in the tournament's history. Hingis, who will be 17 a week on Saturday, supercedes Tracy Austin, who was 17 years and eight months when top-seeded in 1980. Among the leading 16, only Steffi Graf is absent through injury. Graf is making swift progress from the knee injury that she sustained before Wimbledon and hopes to return to competitive tennis in time for the Chase Championships at Madison Square Garden, New York, in November.

Henman, the British No 1, has more to lose from an early exit at Flushing Meadow.

Having reached the quarter-

finals 12 months ago, his

ranking will slip appreciably if he makes an early exit.

Rusedski last night was due to play his opening-round match in the MFS Pro Championships in Boston.

Should he reach the third round, he will

almost certainly overtake

Henman, who has forsaken

tournament play this week, in

favour of practice. Last year, he was not on the opening committee, controversially strayed from the players' official rankings. Among those downgraded was Kafelnikov, who withdrew in protest. This

is the committee's

time, the committee has resisted the urge: Kafelnikov is seeded No 3 behind Pete Sampras, the top seed and defending champion, and Michael Chang, Sampras, with ten grand slam tournament wins to his name, is bidding to close down on Roy Emerson's record of 12.

Boris Becker, seeded No 13, is due to play his last grand slam event before retiring later this year. However, his participation has been thrown into doubt by the death of Axel Meyer-Woelde, 38, a close friend and business associate.

Becker, who pulled out of the Boston event on hearing the news, has not played for four weeks because of injury.

In the women's singles, Martina Hingis, beaten just twice this year, is the youngest No 1 in the tournament's history. Hingis, who will be 17 a week on Saturday, supercedes Tracy Austin, who was 17 years and eight months when top-seeded in 1980. Among the leading 16, only Steffi Graf is absent through injury. Graf is making swift progress from the knee injury that she sustained before Wimbledon and hopes to return to competitive tennis in time for the Chase Championships at Madison Square Garden, New York, in November.

Henman, the British No 1, has more to lose from an early exit at Flushing Meadow.

Having reached the quarter-

finals 12 months ago, his

ranking will slip appreciably if he makes an early exit.

Rusedski last night was due to play his opening-round match in the MFS Pro Championships in Boston.

Should he reach the third round, he will

almost certainly overtake

Henman, who has forsaken

tournament play this week, in

favour of practice. Last year, he was not on the opening committee, controversially strayed from the players' official rankings. Among those downgraded was Kafelnikov, who withdrew in protest. This

is the committee's

time, the committee has resisted the urge: Kafelnikov is seeded No 3 behind Pete Sampras, the top seed and defending champion, and Michael Chang, Sampras, with ten grand slam tournament wins to his name, is bidding to close down on Roy Emerson's record of 12.

Boris Becker, seeded No 13, is due to play his last grand slam event before retiring later this year. However, his participation has been thrown into doubt by the death of Axel Meyer-Woelde, 38, a close friend and business associate.

Becker, who pulled out of the Boston event on hearing the news, has not played for four weeks because of injury.

In the women's singles, Martina Hingis, beaten just twice this year, is the youngest No 1 in the tournament's history. Hingis, who will be 17 a week on Saturday, supercedes Tracy Austin, who was 17 years and eight months when top-seeded in 1980. Among the leading 16, only Steffi Graf is absent through injury. Graf is making swift progress from the knee injury that she sustained before Wimbledon and hopes to return to competitive tennis in time for the Chase Championships at Madison Square Garden, New York, in November.

Henman, the British No 1, has more to lose from an early exit at Flushing Meadow.

Having reached the quarter-

finals 12 months ago, his

ranking will slip appreciably if he makes an early exit.

Rusedski last night was due to play his opening-round match in the MFS Pro Championships in Boston.

</div

Life goes on, but it can never be the same

There was little doubt that a film about the Hungerford massacre would be moving; the only real question was whether Hungerford: Ten Years On (BBC2) would do it in a way that proved worthwhile. As the narration noted, we have become all too familiar with mass loss of life: Hungerford, Dunblane, Hillsborough, Lockerbie, Zeebrugge, Aberfan...

But what the narration didn't mention is that we have also become familiar with how filmmakers treat such disasters. There is a predictability, an inevitability, even a feeling of tokenism about their offerings, particularly when it comes to significant anniversaries. For half an hour, an hour, whatever, we have a quick fix of vicarious grief and then, with a deep breath and a sigh of relief that it wasn't us, we move on.

Lucy Jago, the producer of last night's film, could do nothing

about human nature. But, she could signal, early on, her intention to make this tribute just a little bit different. Instead of children playing, that perennial symbol of life "going on", an elderly couple sang as they did the washing up. They were having such fun that they started to dance around the kitchen. It was a lovely image but it became emblematic of what we had learnt the story behind it.

The woman singing was Kath Wainwright, after her husband had been killed and she had been wounded by Michael Ryan as they drove into Hungerford to visit their son, who in the cruellest of many cruel twists of fate that day was also the local policeman. She had subsequently remarried and moved to a house that was just 200 yards from where she had been shot. Hungerford was such a lovely little town, she explained. Life had moved on — a devoted new husband, singing, dancing,

bingo at the British Legion — but, amid all this normality, the extraordinary had not been forgotten. "It's true what they say: you don't get the bullet that hits you."

Jago concentrated on four families and while they all had different and awful stories to tell, they shared much in common, including a deep-seated sense of guilt. Would it have happened if neighbours had befriended him? Could somebody have disarmed him? This was the sort of film where such questions were asked, but not answered.

Some audiences you sympathised with immediately — the father still haunted by the precise directions he gave his daughter to a picnic site in Savernake Forest. Others took you by surprise, such as the Mayor who felt guilty about the privileged meetings he had with the Prime Minister and the Queen as a direct result of the shootings.

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

For the victims, it was explained, the manner of their deaths was a defining moment, in that they are destined to be remembered forever as somebody killed by Ryan rather than as the people they were. But Jago's intelligent and undoubtedly worthwhile film made clear, it was also a defining moment for those who survived, who now have to live with both the memories of what happened and how they

reacted, however bizarre that now seems.

Kath Wainwright's daughter, Kay, recalled feeling jealous of her policeman brother as he fielded media interest, even when the press rounded on him when they discovered that he had signed Ryan's firearms certificate. Trevor, her brother, not surprisingly remembered it rather differently. What he missed was the spirit in the town for the year after the killings, a spirit that ensured — once again — that life did go on.

A completely different set of feelings were required to get through Plane Crazy, a documentary series charting Bob Cringely's attempt to build a plane in 30 days.

The crucial word in that sentence is "series": I mean, how on earth can one man's vainglorious attempt to build a plane in quadruple quick time be worth three hours of fairly prime-time television? I had a better idea when

Day One finally began after 44 minutes. Cringely is clearly not a man to rush his 180 minutes of fame.

I have so far failed to provide you with an important piece of information: Cringely is American; very, very American. He lives and works in Silicon Valley, receives more than 100 emails a day and has no idea of the meaning of the words "shy and retiring". What Bill Bryson did for Britain and Peter Mayle did for Provence, Cringely hopes to do for

California. The fun in Home Ground (BBC2) was discovering there is a flourishing trade fair for fossils, where \$10,000 will buy you your own fossilised tree fern, complete with fossilised fish. What the fish were doing up the tree fern in the first place was never explained.

The mild disappointment was watching a well-intentioned programme never quite hit its target, never quite proving that the commercial exploitation of fossils was necessarily a bad thing. The tree fern and attendant fish, by the way, were destined to end up in a casino. Very surreal.

Coast, Cringely is big on sharing but by then I was nursing a large chunk of my very own. One last thing, especially for those thinking this must be a variation on the *Challenge Anneka* theme, Cringely has already built five planes. Now we have to watch him building his sixth. Where's the fun in that?

The fun in Home Ground (BBC2) was discovering there is a flourishing trade fair for fossils, where \$10,000 will buy you your own fossilised tree fern, complete with fossilised fish. What the fish were doing up the tree fern in the first place was never explained. The mild disappointment was watching a well-intentioned programme never quite hit its target, never quite proving that the commercial exploitation of fossils was necessarily a bad thing. The tree fern and attendant fish, by the way, were destined to end up in a casino. Very surreal.

BBC1

6.00am *Business Breakfast* (90575)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (78643)
9.00 *Breakfast News Extra* (T) (605372)
12.20 *Ready, Steady, Cook* (T) (503462)
9.50 *Esther* (T) (693704)
10.20 *Put It to the Test* (5967720)
10.45 *Carrier's Caribbean* (T) (289914)
11.00 *News* (T) and *weather* (273065)
11.05 *Due South* (T) (6735876)
11.50 *Good Neighbours* (T) (6593336)
12.00 *News* (T) and *weather* (4305865)
12.05pm *Wipeout* (T) (8561469)
12.35 *Neighbours* (T) (1896338)
1.00 *News* (T) and *weather* (71730)
1.20 *Regional News* (T) (68752556)
1.40 *Midweek on Sycamore Street* (1902) with Dick Van Dyke, George Hamilton and David Warner. A doctor-detective investigates the apparent suicide of an eminent plastic surgeon. There's no shortage of murder suspects. Directed by Christian I. Nyby II (T) (4828020),

3.10 *Quincy* (T) (780488)
4.00 *Popes* (2858643) 4.10 *The Thunderbirds* (T) (2845827) 4.20 *Morph*, TV with Tony Hart (2272655) 4.35 *Prince of Atlantis* (T) (1595484) 5.00 *Newsworld* (T) (2467285) 5.10 *The Lowdown* (T) (3318198)

5.25 *Neighbours* (T) (7257598)
6.00 *News* (T) and *weather* (338)
6.30 *Regional News Magazine* (T) (391)
7.00 *Big Break* (T) of the Future Jim Davidson and John Virgo introduce teenage smokers attempting to win prizes for their schools (8778).

7.30 *TV Time Machine* What has become of the inventions featured on *Tomorrow's World* over the years? (T) (579)

8.00 *The National Lottery* Live from Edinburgh (T) (214469)

8.15 *Dirk Emmer: A Life on the Box* A tribute to the late comedian, introduced by Terry Wogan (T) (487856)

8.45 *Points of View* (T) (19040)

9.00 *News: Regional News* (T) (8865)

9.30 *Men Behaving* Badly Deborah and Dorothy go away for a sailing weekend, leaving the men to get up to mischief (T) (51391)

10.00 *Inside Story: Smoke Rings* Is there a connection between the West's tobacco plants and the smugglers trying to get cigarettes into China? (T) (643001)

10.55 *Castles Right Here Right Now* The band introduce a preview of selected tracks from their third album *Be Here Now* and give their own account of what has undoubtedly been a tumultuous year for them (T) (367339)

11.35 *Cooley Ice* (1991) with Vanessa Redgrave, Michael Gambon and Bob Brown. A motorcyclist, who is also a rap singer, rides into a small town and falls for a pretty student — unaware her father is being pursued by crooks. Directed by David Kellogg (470010)

1.05pm-1.10 *Weather* (236773)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes The numbers next to each TV programme allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a VideoPlus+™ handset. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record. VideoPlus+™, VideoCodes and Video+ Programmes are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

BBC2

6.00am *Open University: Four Towns and a Circuit* (2895759) 6.25 *Vibrations* (6043075) 6.50 *Work and Energy* (6042277)

7.15 *See Hear News* (T) and *singing* (9822759)

7.30 *TeleTubbies* (T) (4276651) 7.55 *Postman Pat* (T) (1471469) 8.05 *Recoons* (T) (7883778) 8.35 *Smart* (6593407) 8.35 *Spiderman* (T) (1543778) 8.35 *Shrek's Adventures* (6585285) 10.25 *Shrek's Adventures* (T) (6585287) 11.15 *Awash with Colour* (6272691)

11.45 *The Private Affairs of Bell Ami* (1946)

ITV

ITV

6.00am *GMTV* (7414407)
9.25 *Who Loses or Draw* (T) (5028001)
9.55 *Judge Judy* (T) (996827)

10.20 *News* (T) (6781575)

10.25 *Regional News* (T) (7808464)
10.30 *Murder by the Book* (1997) with Robert Hayes, Catherine Mary Stewart and Celeste Holm. A writer gets entangled in a murder case worthy of his novels. Directed by Mel Damski (51757049)

12.20pm *Regional News* (T) (4301049)

12.30 *News* (T) and *weather* (1982126)

12.55 *Shortland Street* (231302)

1.00 *Home and Away* (T) (14805482)

1.15 *Labour of Love: The Arietta*

CENTRAL

CENTRAL

As *HTV West* except:
10.30am *Film: Decoration Day* (51757459)
12.25pm-1.20 *A Country Practice* (567227)

1.30-3.20 *Film: All for Mary* (141486)

5.10-5.40 *Shortland Street* (231302)

6.25-7.00 *Central News* (325693)

10.45 *Film: Conan the Destroyer* (19321594)

12.30pm *Film: The Blood of Fu Manchu* (931247)

1.30 *Light Lunch* (T) (57681)

1.30 *The Living Sea: Shadowland*

A nocturnal visit to the coral reefs (T) (63136)

2.00 *Racing* from York Brough Scott introduces the 2.05, 2.35 (Yorkshire Oaks), 3.10 (Tote-Ebor Hcap) and 3.45 (Scottish Equitable Grand Prix Stakes) (5436)

4.00 *Bewitched* An episode set in England (T) (372) 4.30 *Countdown* (T) (4640353)

4.45 *Ricki Lake* (T) (6548556) 5.30 *Pet Rescue* (T) (1138)

5.20 *Snapt* presented by Denise Van Outen (T) (579)

5.30 *Roseanne* Roseanne and Jackie console a broken-hearted Crystal with a night out on the town and some observations on life and men (T) (371)

7.00 *News and weather* (580730)

7.50 *Girls, Girls, Girls* Imogen describes a car accident that had far-reaching consequences (515440)

CHANNEL 4

6.00am *Sesame Street* (T) (73285)

7.00 *The Bigg Breakfast* with 9.05 *Saved by the Bell* (T) (9.25 Alex Mack 10.05 Sister, Sister) (T) 10.35 *The Crystal Maze* (T) (11.35 The Bigg Breakfast) (18405807)

12.05pm *California Dreams* Styk asks Lynne out on the town (T) (703322)

12.30pm *Light Lunch* (T) (57681)

1.30 *The Living Sea: Shadowland*

A nocturnal visit to the coral reefs (T) (63136)

2.00 *Racing* from York Brough Scott introduces the 2.05, 2.35 (Yorkshire Oaks), 3.10 (Tote-Ebor Hcap) and 3.45 (Scottish Equitable Grand Prix Stakes) (5436)

4.00 *Bewitched* An episode set in England (T) (372) 4.30 *Countdown* (T) (4640353)

4.45 *Ricki Lake* (T) (6548556) 5.30 *Pet Rescue* (T) (1138)

5.20 *Snapt* presented by Denise Van Outen (T) (579)

5.30 *Roseanne* Roseanne and Jackie console a broken-hearted Crystal with a night out on the town and some observations on life and men (T) (371)

7.00 *News and weather* (580730)

7.50 *Girls, Girls, Girls* Imogen describes a car accident that had far-reaching consequences (515440)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am *5 News Early* (7400556)

7.30 *WideWorld: Whose Health?* Dr Mark Porter looks at doctor-patient consultations (7.10) (6126546)

8.00 *Havakkozo* (2559117) 8.00 *Wishbone* (9881020) 9.00 *Wind in the Willows* (2522440) 9.30 *Stickin' Around* (9465163)

10.00 *Exclusive* (T) (6969333)

10.30 *Flights of Fancy: In Praise of Penguins* in (T) (2561952)

11.00 *Leaza Chat* show hosted by Leaza Gibbons (2798333)

11.50 *Double Espresso* (33318662)</p



EQUESTRIANISM 37

Change of heart gives Stark his Burghley chance

SPORT

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 20 1997

RACING 39

Dettori proves equal to the task on Singspiel

Crowds snub Irish swimmer as long-running drug rumours overshadow victory

Smith celebrates empty triumph

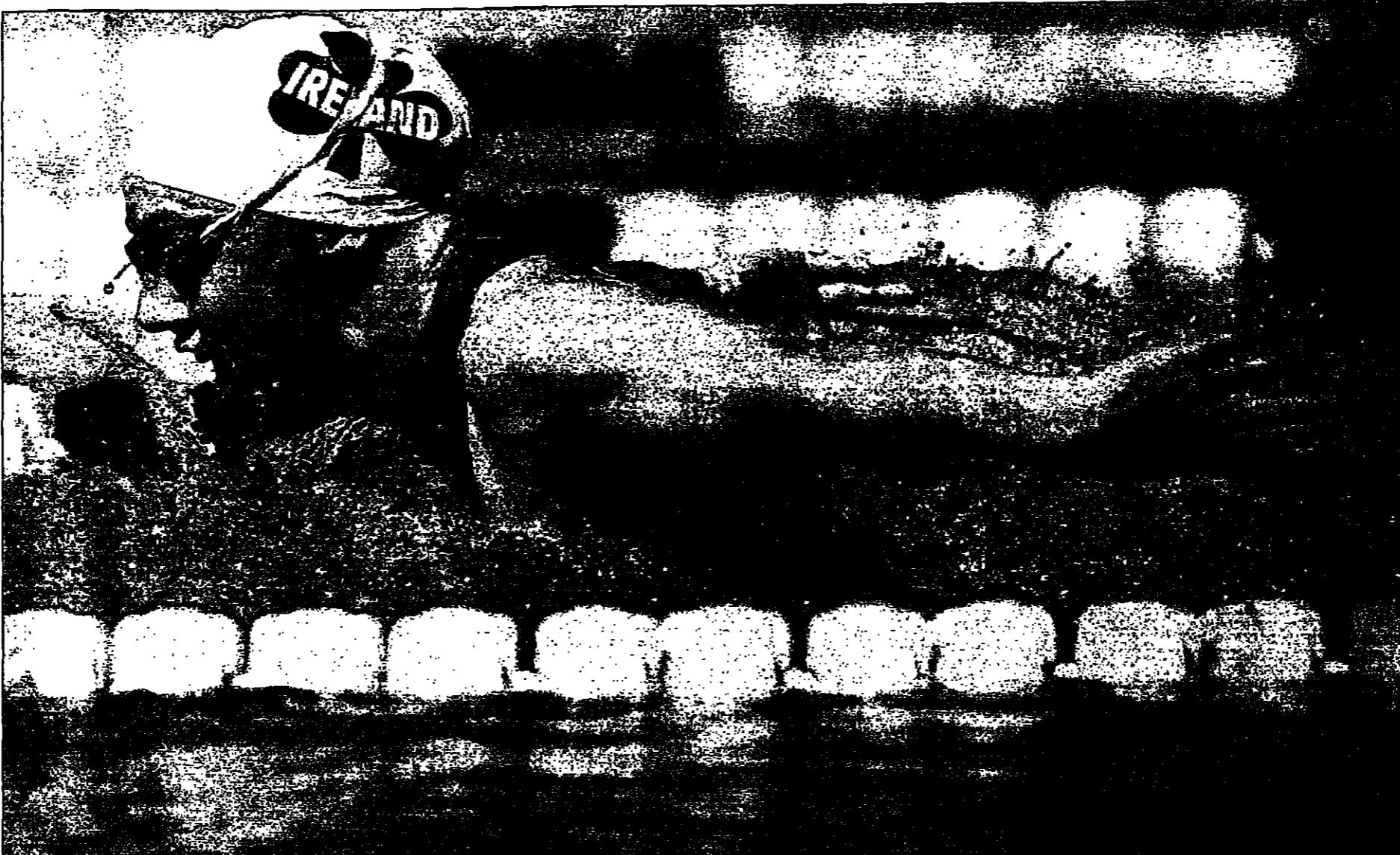


Michelle Smith on a campaign of innuendo haunting the European title holder in Seville

Michelle Smith stood forlornly on the podium, clutching a crumpled Irish tricolour as she waited to receive her latest gold medal. She had no option but to watch the crowd, consisting mainly of coaches and fellow competitors, stream towards the exits. Those who remained at the San Pablo pool here offered her no more than a polite round of applause. The insult was intentional, the victory empty.

That win, in the 400 metres individual medley at the European championships yesterday afternoon, was as predictable as the symbolism of the reaction it that aroused. Damnation by faint praise has become an occupational hazard for the triple Olympic champion since she became a watchword for sport's loss of innocence in Atlanta. She has never failed a drugs test yet an immediate summons to her third in the past week merely added another dimension to the innuendo.

"I'm very very proud of what I've done here," she insisted when she emerged from doping control. She maintained firm eye-contact with questioners, but her tremulous voice revealed inner tension. "I don't accept that I'm damned if I do win and damned if I don't. I've



Smith secures her victory in the 400 metres individual medley in the European swimming championships at Seville yesterday. Photographs: Marc Aspland

never felt like I wanted to quit this. Swimming is my life. It's what I do, what I love."

Her husband, the former discus thrower, Erik de Bruin, decided that she had been sufficiently effusive. He nudged her in the back, made a show of bending to collect her kitbag and led her out of the complex, ignoring her obligation to appear at an official press conference. The remote possibility that she could be banned from the championships as a result will set the media agenda for the rest of the week.

Atlanta's morality tale has

soured into a sad soap opera, in which Smith has been typecast as principal villain. All champions are, to an extent, isolated by their achievements, but she has been uniquely marginalised by mistrust. She trains alone, in a four-lane pool in Kilkenny, and has no close friends in the sport. Her husband is omnipresent, a human shield.

Vendettas in the small, occasionally seamy world of Irish swimming are conducted with a subtlety that owes more to expedience than experience. The majority of officials, cowed into submission by the unprecedented nature of her success, are blithely non-committal in public. Privately, however, they are resentful of having to promote a tainted role model.

The whispering campaign against the Olympic champion shows no sign of losing its momentum. Damning statistics, charting the unlikely nature of her improvements, are routinely leaked. Details of her drug-testing programme reach the public domain in similarly surreptitious fashion. Inevitably, those sympathetic to her cause use identical methods to get her counter-arguments across.

The gossips have a small-town viciousness in keeping with a scarred sport, because the problems of Irish swimming extend beyond Smith's credibility. Frank McCann,

the former Ireland team manager, is serving a life sentence for the murder of his wife and niece. Derry O'Rourke, Smith's former coach, is awaiting trial on statutory rape charges involving nine swimmers under the age of 17. George Gibney, head coach of the Ireland squad at the Seoul Olympics, fled the country when he was similarly charged.

To be at his wife's side in Seville, de Bruin was obliged to be uncharacteristically amiable. He apologised to the swimming authorities for forgoing his accreditation for

the last European championship, in Vienna in 1995, but appeared unconcerned by the slur on his character. He makes no attempt to conceal his bitterness at his four-year suspension for drug abuse, which was completed last month.

He is openly dismissive of other coaches, who are suspicious of his refusal to discuss the specifics of his training regime. His wife, who competed in her married name as a gesture of defiance, is his only pupil. He was in solicitous mood after her heat yesterday morning when she refused all

interview requests before being ushered towards Chakie White, an Ireland swimming coach who, in his secondary role of journalist, has become her principal apologist.

The damage-limitation exercise is overture. Unlike Amy Van Dyken, of the United States, who became a millionaire after winning two individual gold medals in Atlanta, Smith is thought to have earned barely £100,000 from her three Olympic titles. Apart from one appearance in a shampoo commercial, her only other links are with a milk company and the Irish language board.

She is on her third agent in 18 months. The irony is that the debate that continues to focus on Smith is merely the symptom of a bigger problem.

Don Talbot, of Australia, the most influential coach over the past 30 years, is in Seville lobbying for the adoption of a more cohesive anti-drug policy. He recognises the damage inflicted by the globally documented unease about Smith, and is affronted by the drug-driven records set by Chinese swimmers. He insists that more than four out-of-competition tests a year are required.

"People say why, why, why, but they know very well why," he said. "They don't want to admit that our house is not in order. I'm trying to make sure

the drug issue doesn't go away because, in a bureaucratic sport like swimming, it can be put to one side."

Smith has heard the slurs,

the unsubstantiated rumours,

"I don't listen to it anymore," she insisted. "I have had doping control after doping control. If you are a three-times Olympic champion and No 1 in the world, you've got to be tested as much as if not more than anyone else. I have been this year."

Her victory yesterday, given suitably bizarre backing by a trumpeter playing *Yma Oma*, again raised more questions than answers. She beat the 15-year-old Ukrainian Yana Kuchikova, over the last 50 metres, but her most daunting opponent will remain the Frankensteen monster of her reputation.

Gold for Britain as Palmer triumphs

FROM CRAIG LORD IN SEVILLE

PAUL PALMER drew first blood for Great Britain under a burning sun here at the European swimming championships yesterday, his victory in the 200 metres freestyle representing his first senior international gold medal.

It was also the nation's first medal of any colour in the event since the distance was introduced 12 championships ago in 1970 — and a second was nearly won by James Salter, who missed the home by just 0.01sec after being in last place at all three turns.

Palmer, 22, noted that his win in 1min 49.9sec at the San Pablo pool over the favourite, Massimiliano Rosolino, of Italy, was offbeat slower than when he finished fourth over the distance in 1993, but winning was more important to him than the time and, given a slightly slower pace, Palmer said: "I never thought I would lose." That confidence was borne out of his Olympic silver medal in the 400 metres freestyle in Atlanta last year.

He said: "I don't want that to sound arrogant, but, after last year, I feel I matter more. I came here and saw Rosolino in training and, normally, I would have thought, 'God, he looks good,' but this time I just thought, 'So what, I'm just as good.'"

The eight swimmers got off to a keen start and raced within a second of each other throughout the four-length battle. Palmer turned third at each of the three turns, but started to overtake a 0.7sec deficit at the start of the last length. With 20 metres to go, he drew level with the Italian; whose spider stroke was beginning to show signs of stress as panic and pain set in.

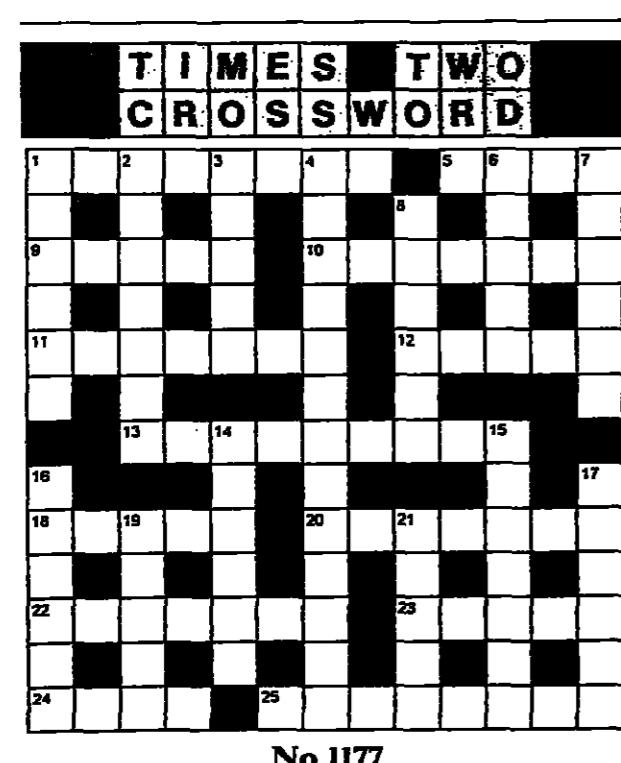
Palmer maintained a long and relaxed stroke to edge ahead and win by 0.1sec with Bela Szabadics, of Hungary, third, a further 0.6sec adrift just ahead of Salter.

Salter, 21, an Englishman who trains in Edinburgh, said he was disappointed that a second Union Flag would not be flying above the San Pablo pool: his heat time had been faster than his medal-winning time.

Photograph: page 37



Arm raised in triumph, Smith acknowledges her win



No 1177

ACROSS
1 Exhausted (4,4): useless person (8)
5 Unwanted plant: feeble person (4)
9 Out of order, ruined (5)
10 Screw up, collapse (7)
12 Show falsify (5)
13 Unwanted scraps (9)
18 Jumped (5)
20 Cattle disease, may infect man (7)
22 Victoria Falls river (7)
23 Green snooker fabric (5)
24 (Nordic) character (4)
25 Ignored (8)

SOLUTION TO NO 1176
ACROSS: 1 Pupa, 3 Specific, 8 Capable, 10 Shred, 11 For dear life, 13 Stride, 15 Apercu, 17 Thin-skinned, 20 Chain
21 October, 22 Excruciate, 23 Fired

DOWN: 1 Pacifist, 2 Paper, 4 Poetry, 5 Case in point, 6 Forbear, 7 Coda, 9 Breadwinner, 12 Sundered, 14 Rat race, 16 Escort, 18 Nobel, 19 Arch

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 1172
In association with BRITISH MIDLANDS

ACROSS: 1 Rift, 3 Outcast, 8 Present, 9 Admire, 10 Swift, 11 Elevate, 13 Geriatric, 17 Maypole, 19 Probe, 20 Angle, 22 Furtive, 23 Tinies, 24 Well
DOWN: 1 Repose, 2 Feeling, 3 On the face of it, 4 Trace, 5 Aim, 6 Tether, 7 Better, 12 Anchors, 14 Report, 15 Impart, 16 Reject, 18 Obscure, 21 Gin

1st PRIZE of a return ticket travelling economy class to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLANDS' domestic or international network is J. Malouf, Watford, Herts.
2nd PRIZE of a return ticket to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLANDS' domestic network is P. Manwaring, Woking, Surrey. All flights subject to availability.

England ready to let Rowell continue

BY MARK SOISTER

JACK ROWELL is expected to be confirmed as the England coach through to the 1999 World Cup at an emergency meeting of the Rugby Football Union's national playing committee in London today. Given Ian McGeechan's decision to turn down the post and the lack of a credible alternative, it is understood that Rowell will be offered the opportunity to complete the mission he set out in 1994.

That he wants to continue is not in doubt, but on what terms remains to be seen. He has said that business commitments will restrict him to a part-time role, while the RFU has been adamant that a full-time coach is necessary. However, it is felt that with give and take on both sides and an element of face-saving after the public courting of McGeechan, Rowell will come out on top.

Time is running out and with possible contenders unable to be prised away from lucrative long-term contracts and with the RFU reluctant to spend huge sums of money in compensation, the Twickenham hierarchy has found itself boxed in.

"We [England] have come through a difficult time with radical change in the team and style of play," he said yesterday. "We now have a platform on which to build." His wish to be allowed to finish the job appears to have been granted, if only by default.

Rowell, who said yesterday that the issue could have been handled with more sensitivity, was otherwise non-committal, saying only that he was "pretty relaxed" about the situation and did not expect to hear anything conclusive until the

Lloyd picks moment to rake over the Ashes

BY ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

DAVID LLOYD, the England coach, admitted yesterday that his team had made no progress this summer in narrowing the gap with Australia. On the eve of the final Ashes Test at the Oval, he also expressed his frustration with England's recurrent failings in consistency.

Lloyd told for the first time of his anger behind the closed door of the Trent Bridge dressing-room after the summer ten days ago that has rendered this last match irrelevant to the series. "I was very straightforward," he said. "It was unacceptable to be bowled out like that."

"We have said time and again that we must eradicate the bad sessions that are costing us matches. It is taking time — more time than I had hoped and more time than most people probably think we should have."

Robert Croft was yesterday released from England's 14-strong party, making way for Phil Tufnell's first Test of summer. Tufnell has been selected in each of the six Test squads, but been sent back to his county before all five

previous games. "It's been a strange year," he said yesterday, "just driving up and down, all just driving up and down."

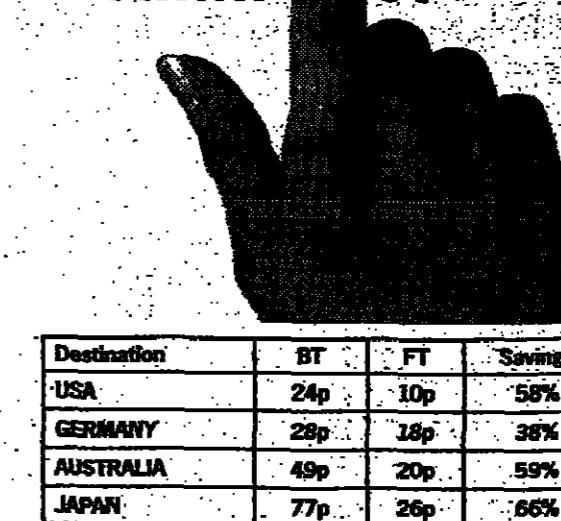
Tufnell, in jokey mood, reflected on the fact that his only Test cricket in the past three years has been played overseas. "I must be a good tourist," he said. "On being told a rumour that the Australians — especially the Waugh brothers — enjoy his bowling, he recalled his most recent Test against them. "Adelaide, last tour, I think we won... I think I got Mark Waugh out for two."

Devon Malcolm missed yesterday's training session for a benefit lunch, of all things, but he definitely plays tomorrow. The remaining doubt involves Dean Headley, who is still struggling with a bruised right heel. Peter Martin will stay with the squad on standby.

Shaun Young, recruited from his county season with Gloucestershire, will make his Test debut for Australia.

Lloyd's verdict, page 46
Hunt's return, page 46
ITC details, page 46

LONG DISTANCE UP TO 66°
CHEAPER THAN B.T.



Destination BT FT Savings

USA 24p 10p 58%

GERMANY 28p 18p 38%

AUSTRALIA 49p 20p 59%

JAPAN 77p 26p 66%

STANDARD RATE one minute call including VAT

If you've got a BT phone, you can make big savings to over 250 countries by adding First Telecom's service to it.

Once you've opened an account with us, you just dial a simple number before you make any long distance or overseas calls.

To see how much further we can make your money go, Think First.

FIRST TELECOM

0800 458 0099

Lloyd's verdict, page 46
Hunt's return, page 46
ITC details, page 46